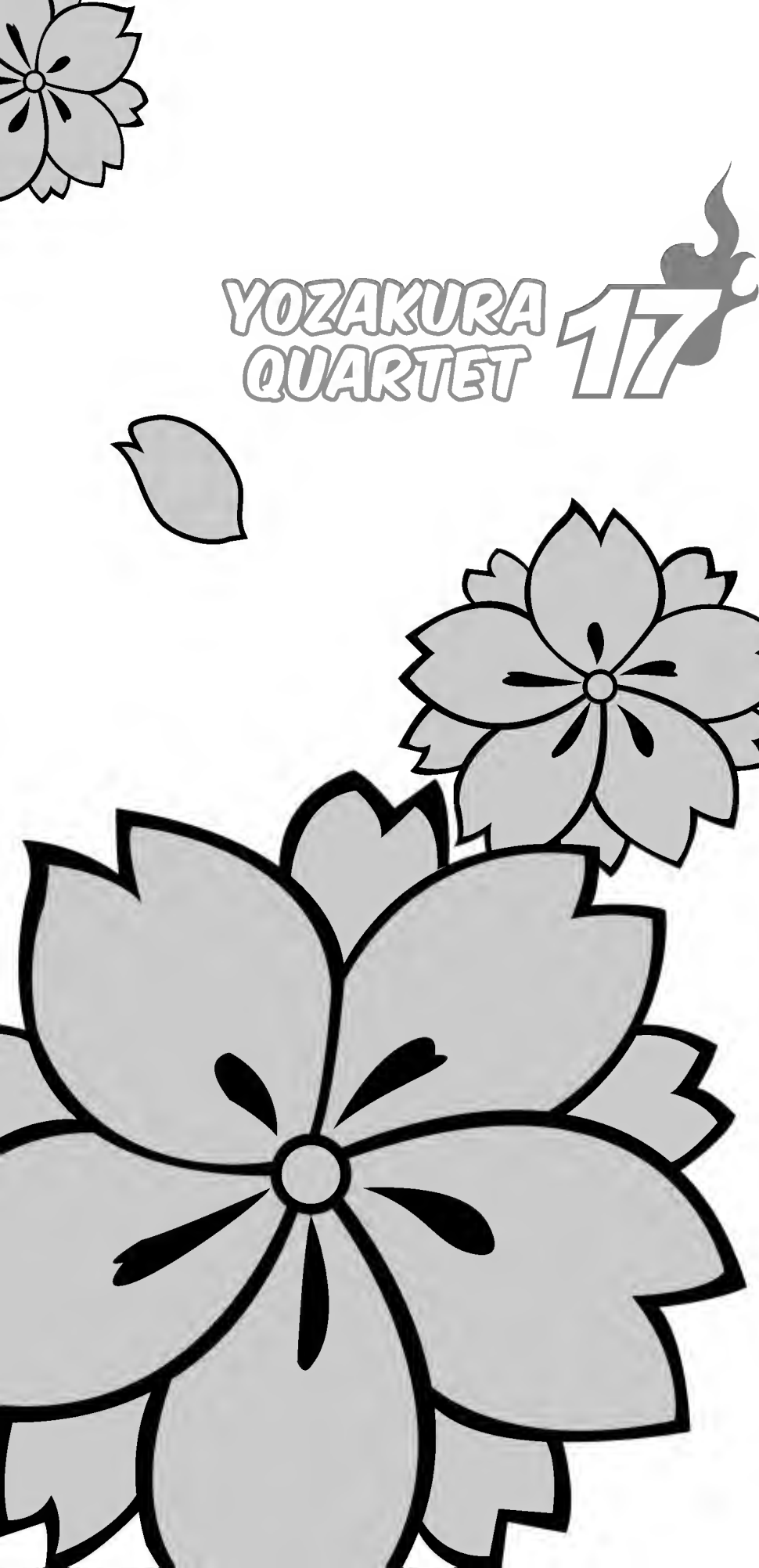
17
Yozakura Quartet
Suzuhito Yasuda


YOZAKURA
QUARTET
17

A RAMBUNCTIOUS, MOODY, ALMOND-EYED, NOODLE/COMEDY-LOVING, LOW-BLOOD-PRESSURED, HEALTHY, SOUND-SLEEPING, SCARF-CLAD, PONYTAILED DEMON HIGH SCHOOLER AND THE MAYOR OF SAKURASHIN. LATELY, SHE'S STARTED LEARNING HOW TO COOK IN AN EFFORT TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT. EVEN SO, IT SEEMS SHE STILL LOVES AKINA'S COOKING THE MOST.

HIME YARIZAKURA

THE DIRECTOR OF THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. AS ABOUT 20% OF HIS WORKDAY GOES INTO MAKING FOOD FOR HIME AND HIS EMPLOYEES, HE'S OFTEN IN THE OFFICE VERY LATE.

AKINA HIIZUMI

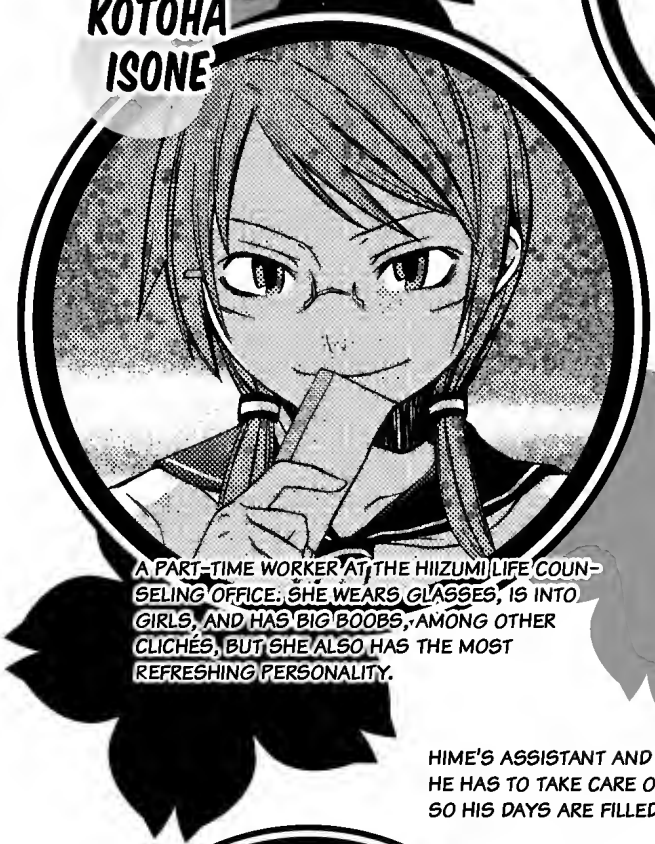
Quartet of cherry blossoms in the night

YOZAKURA QUARTET

CHARACTER PROFILE

AO NANAMI

AN EMPLOYEE OF THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. SHE'S AS MUCH OF A RICE FANATIC AS HIME IS A NOODLE FANATIC. THIS MUST BE WHAT THEY MEAN BY "TWO GREAT RIVALS CANNOT COEXIST."



KOTOHA ISONE

A PART-TIME WORKER AT THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. SHE WEARS GLASSES, IS INTO GIRLS, AND HAS BIG BOOBS, AMONG OTHER CLICHÉS, BUT SHE ALSO HAS THE MOST REFRESHING PERSONALITY.

KYOSUKE KISHI

HIME'S ASSISTANT AND OVERSEER (BABYSITTER). HE HAS TO TAKE CARE OF BOTH HIME AND TOUKA, SO HIS DAYS ARE FILLED WITH STRESS.

TOUKA KISHI

KYOSUKE'S YOUNGER SISTER AND THE FAIRER HALF OF THE TWO ONI SIBLINGS. THAT SAID, SHE LEADS THE MOST NORMAL LIFE, AS BEFITTING A HIGH-SCHOOL GIRL. SHE USED TO DO ARCHERY, BUT NOW PRACTICES *AIKIDO*.

ENJIN HIIZUMI

A DESCENDANT OF ENYOU HIIZUMI. HE TOOK OVER THE BODY OF GIN, AO'S OLDER BROTHER, AND HE IS PLANNING TO MAKE THE SEVEN PILLARS BLOOM IN ORDER TO MERGE THE TWO DIMENSIONS.

THE LAND GOD OF SAKURASHIN. SHE CAN OFTEN BE SEEN LOITERING AROUND TOWN, SO SHE'S NOT THE MOST DIGNIFIED DEITY.

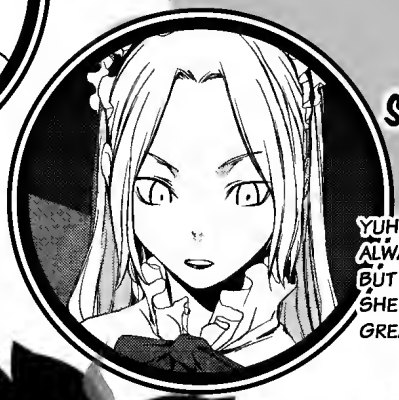
YAE SHINATSUHIKO

THE DISTRICT MAYOR WHO COORDINATES THE TOWNS. HE IS ALSO A LAND GOD. DEEP DOWN, HE IS A PERVERTED OLD MAN.

YUHI SHINATSUHIKO

A DEMON DOCTOR AND TOWN ICON. SHE HAS BEEN ABSTAINING FROM SHOW BUSINESS LATELY.

JURI



YUHI'S SECRETARY. SHE IS ALWAYS ORDERED TO COSPLAY, BUT SHE SEEMS TO ENJOY IT. SHE IS ALSO JURI'S GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.

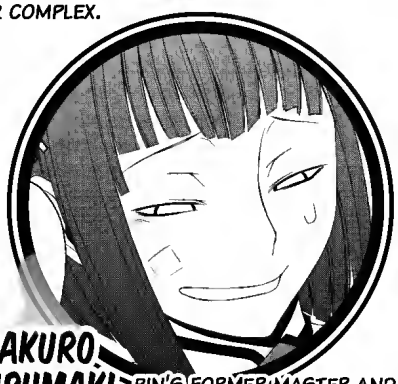
MARIABELL

JURI'S YOUNGER SISTER. A WITCH/MAGICIAN WITH A SISTER COMPLEX.

LILA

A SWIMSUIT-CLAD DEMON BLADE USER. SORT OF A SPACE CASE, BUT SUPER STRONG.

IRUKA KUJOIN

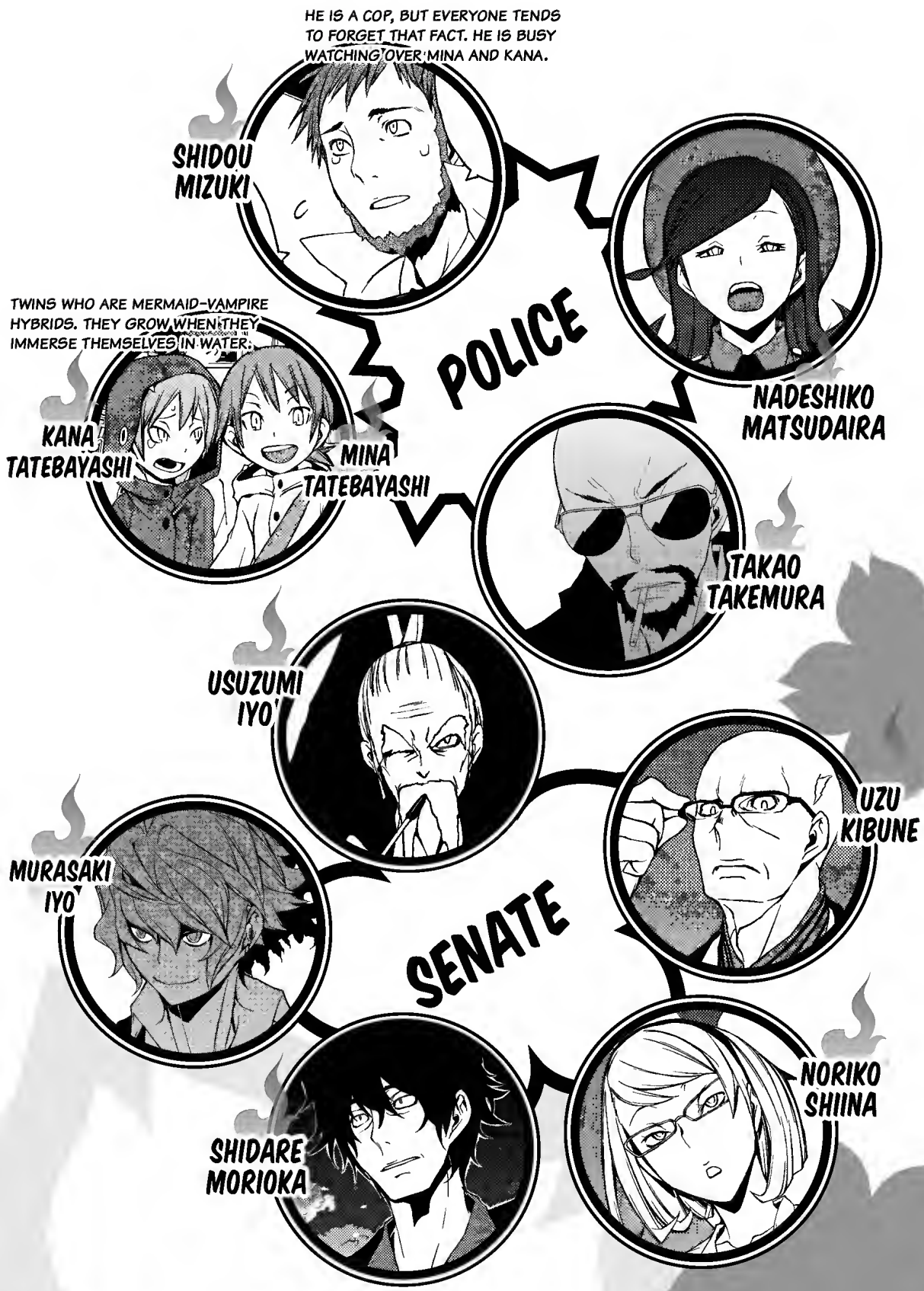


RIN'S FORMER MASTER AND A NECROMANCER, SHE ATTACKED SAKURASHIN IN ORDER TO TAKE BACK RIN BUT WAS THWARTED AND REFORMED.

ZAKURO KURUMAKI

A JIANGSHI WHO WORKS AT A RAMEN RESTAURANT. IT SEEMS LIKE SHE'S ALWAYS SLACKING OFF, BUT SHE'S SURPRISINGLY DILIGENT. WAS KIDNAPPED BUT RETURNED SAFELY.

RIN AZUMA



OUTLINE

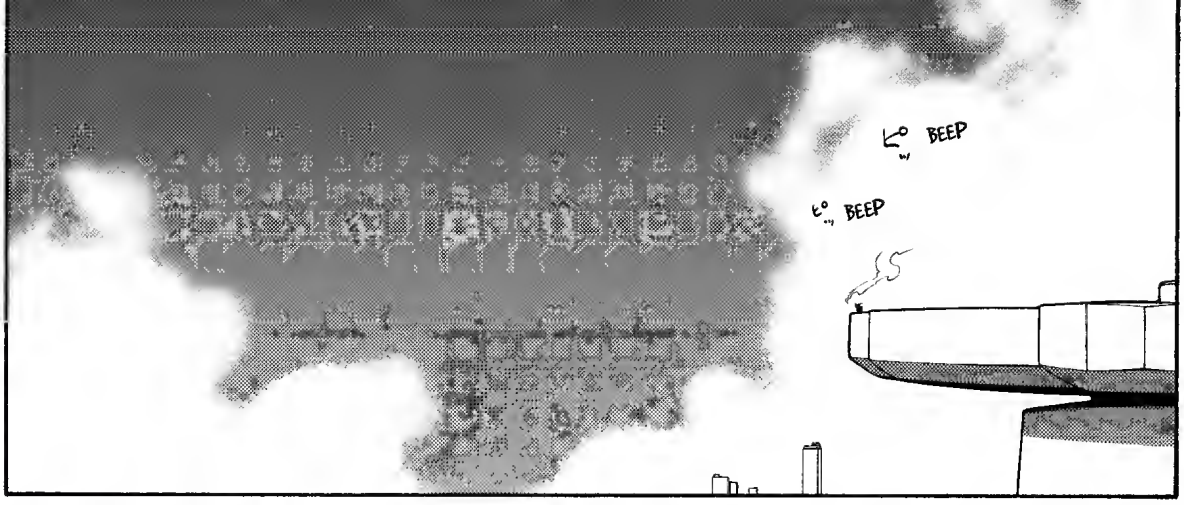
JUST AS THINGS RETURN TO NORMAL IN SAKURASHIN FOLLOWING THE YAMABIKO ATTACK, DARK CLOUDS BREW OVER AT THE SENATE...

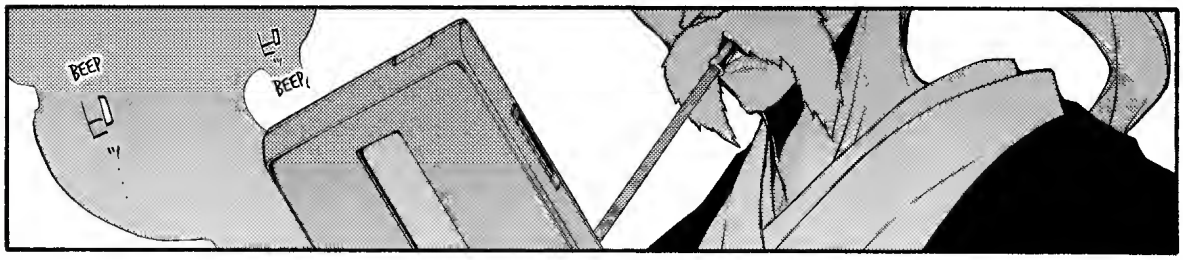
YOZAKURA QUARTET

17

CONTENTS

007 PAST AND PRESENT (PART ONE)
039 PAST AND PRESENT (PART TWO)
073 PAST AND PRESENT (EPILOGUE)
105 GIRLS
127 BOYS
157 PLEDGING FLOWER
185 COUNTRYSIDE KIDS
212 EXTRA


BEEP
BEEP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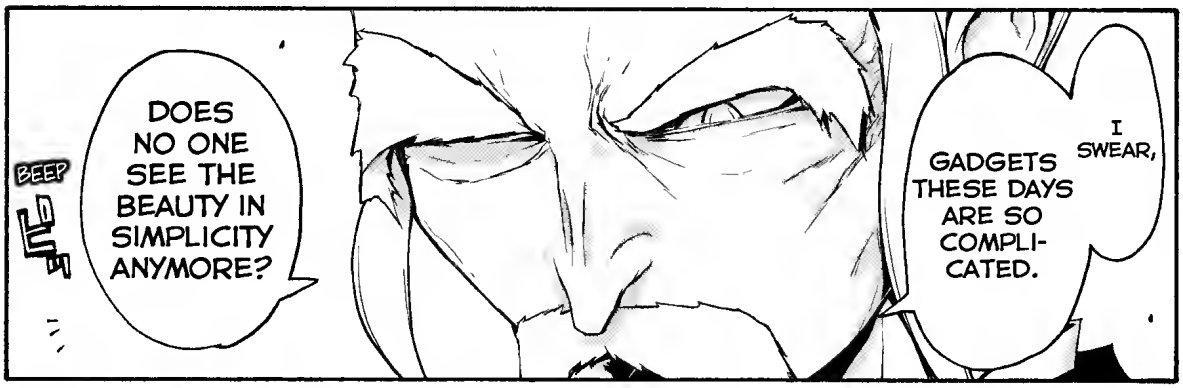
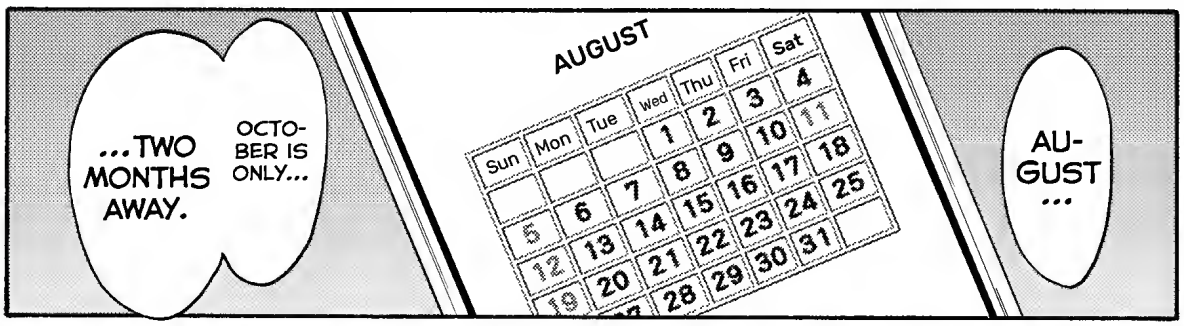
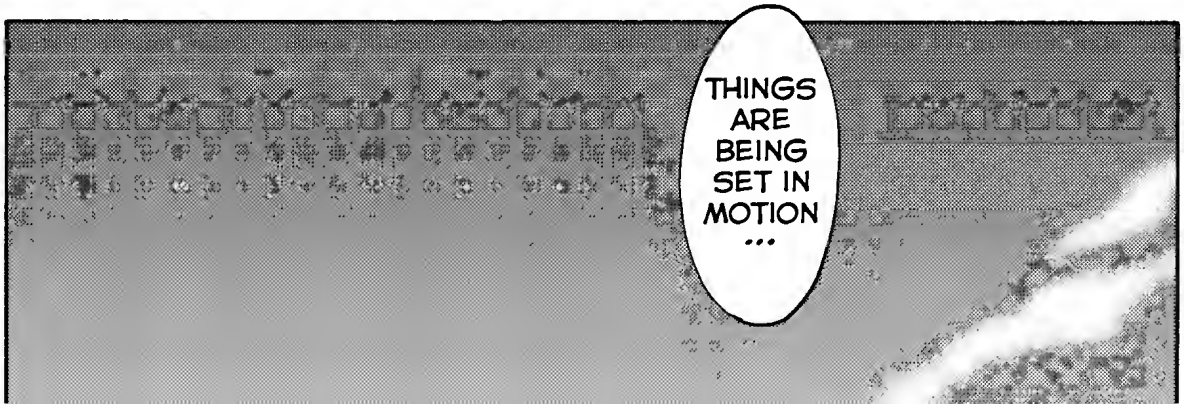
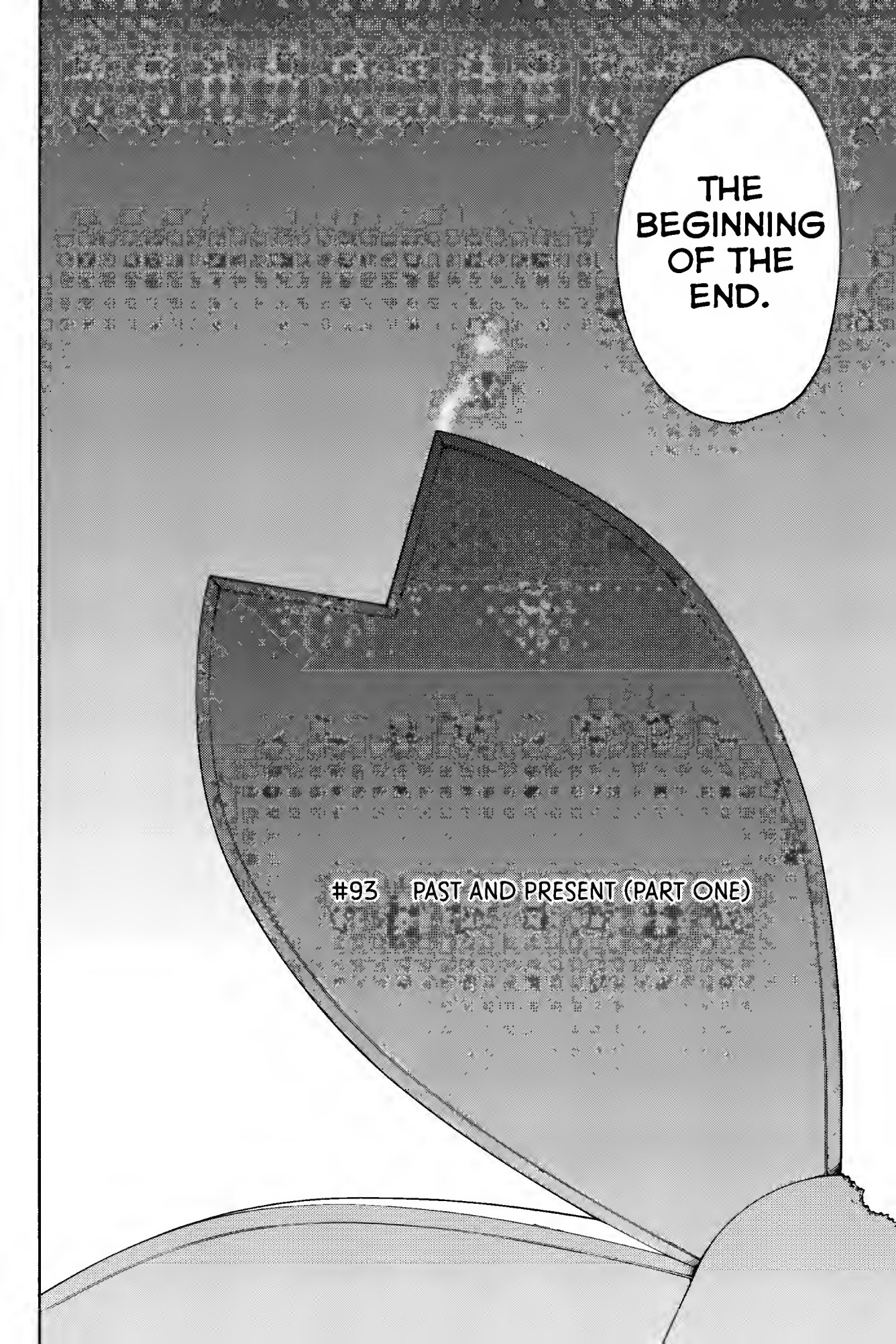
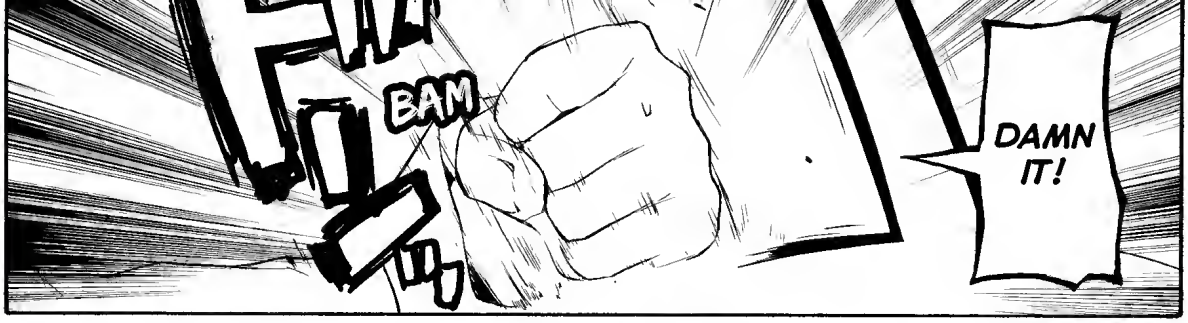

BEEP
DOES NO ONE SEE THE BEAUTY IN SIMPLICITY ANYMORE?
I SWEAR, GADGETS THESE DAYS ARE SO COMPLI-CATED.

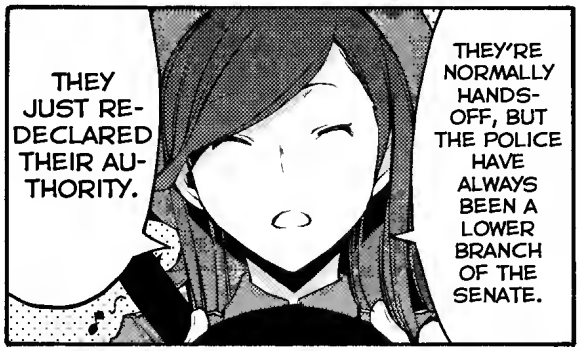

...TWO MONTHS AWAY.
OCTO-BER IS ONLY...
AUGUST
Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
AU-GUST ...


THINGS ARE BEING SET IN MOTION ...


THE BEGINNING OF THE END.
#93 PAST AND PRESENT (PART ONE)


BAM
DAMN IT!

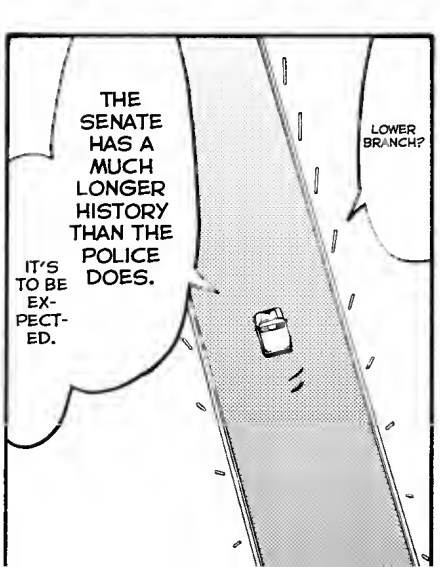
VRUM
SMILE! SMILE!
YOU'RE GONNA BREAK SOMETHING, KYO-CHAN.
OH... SOR-RY.


THEY'RE NORMALLY HANDS-OFF, BUT THE POLICE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LOWER BRANCH OF THE SENATE.
THEY JUST RE-DECLARED THEIR AU-THORITY.

THE SENATE HAS TAKEN OVER NATIONAL DEFENSE AND CUT EXTERNAL COMMUNI-CATIONS.
DID YOU KNOW THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, NADESHI-KO-SAN?
GRIT

BECAUSE THEY'RE GETTING SERI-OUS...
...IN PREPA-RATION FOR THE MONTH OF GODS.

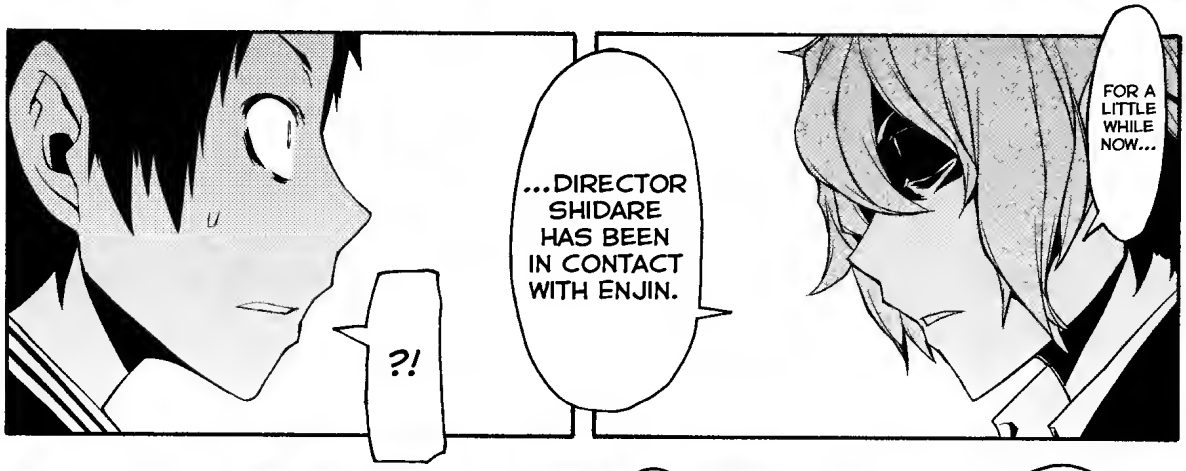
THEN THE REASON THEY CUT COMMUNI-CATIONS IS...


LOWER BRANCH?
THE SENATE HAS A MUCH LONGER HISTORY THAN THE POLICE DOES.
IT'S TO BE EX-PECT-ED.

WHAT-EVER.
WHAT'S MORE IMPORT-ANT...
...IS THAT "THING" THEY HAD IN THE BASE-MENT.
GRUM GRUM
THEY SAID SHIDARE-SAN WOULD EXPLAIN EVERY-THING,
BUT SEEING AS HE'S UP AND DISAP-PEARED ...
!
ACK!
DOOM
WHA ?!
MURA-SAKI?!

TAKE ME TO THE MAYOR'S HOUSE, PLEASE.
HUH?
I CAN'T SEE!
Roll
I'M SURE YOU ALL HAVE ...
...A LOT OF QUESTIONS.
SHIDARE-SAN HAS...
DISAP-PEARED ?!
SIP
おぉ...

WH-WHY ...?
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S AFTER,
BUT WE DO HAVE ONE POTENTIAL LEAD.

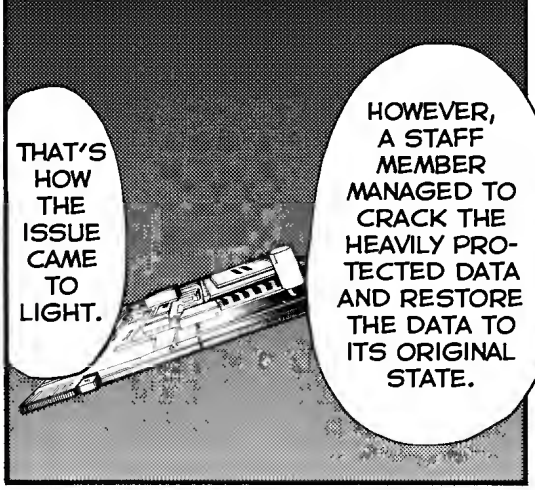

FOR A LITTLE WHILE NOW...
...DIRECTOR SHIDARE HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ENJIN.
?!

THAT EXPLAINS WHY ENJIN WAS ABLE TO USE *ONMYODO*.
WHY WOULD SHIDARE-SAN DO SUCH A THING?
...

IT COULD JUST BE...
...BECAUSE HE'S A SCIENTIST.
IT MAY VERY WELL HAVE BEEN A DEAL IN ORDER TO COLLECT DATA ON ENJIN.
...

RIGHT HERE.
TAP
TAP
...
I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE HE'D BE CARELESS ENOUGH TO GET CAUGHT...
WAIT.
HOW DID YOU FIND OUT THEY WERE WORKING TOGETHER?
IT ACTS AS A GPS, AS WELL AS A HIGH-FIDELITY MICRO-PHONE.
...HAS A MICROCHIP IMPLANTED IN THEIR SHOULDER.
EVERY MEMBER OF THE SENATE...
...TO MAKE IT APPEAR AS IF HE'D NEVER LEFT HIS ROOM.
...WAS TAM-PERED WITH BY DIRECTOR SHIDARE ...
GPS INFO, VOICE RECORD-INGS, ALL THE INFO FROM WHEN HE WAS MEETING ENJIN...
HUH?
NO.
HE WOULDN'T SLIP UP LIKE THAT.
!
THAT'S HOW YOU FOUND OUT THEY WERE MEET-ING?

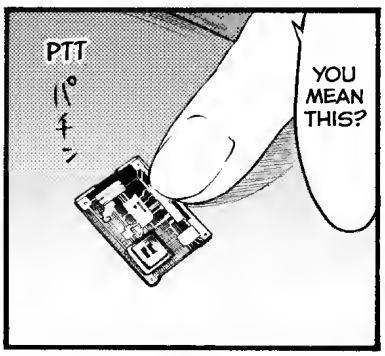
STAFF MEMBER...
HEY... YOU HAVE ONE IN YOUR SHOULDER, TOO, RIGHT?
DOES THAT MEAN ...

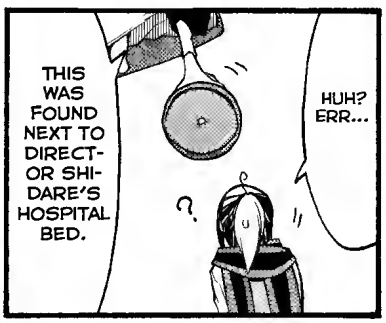

THAT'S HOW THE ISSUE CAME TO LIGHT.
HOWEVER, A STAFF MEMBER MANAGED TO CRACK THE HEAVILY PROTECTED DATA AND RESTORE THE DATA TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE.

YOU BET WE ARE.

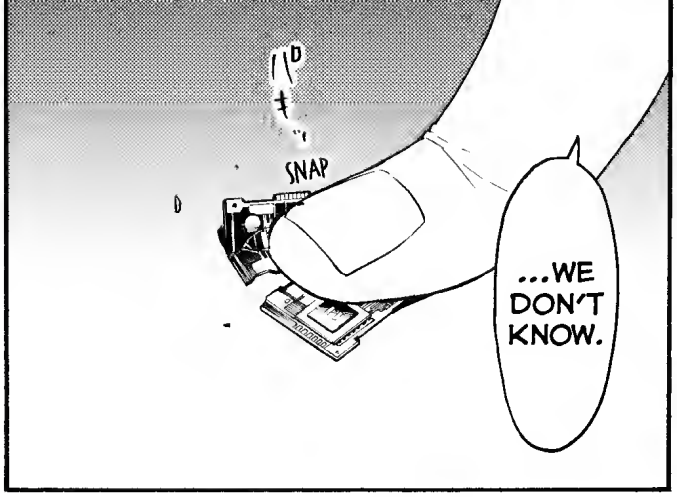
...THE SENATE IS LISTENING TO THIS CONVERSATION?

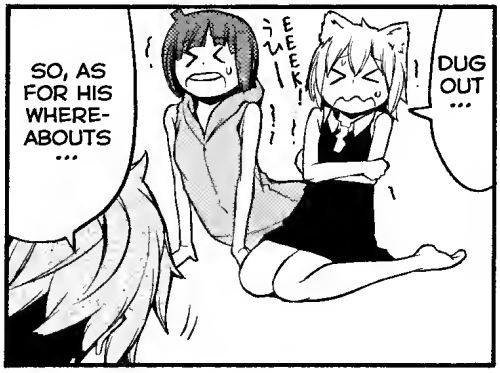
HE DUG IT OUT OF HIS SHOULDER AND LEFT IT THERE.
!


PTT
YOU MEAN THIS?

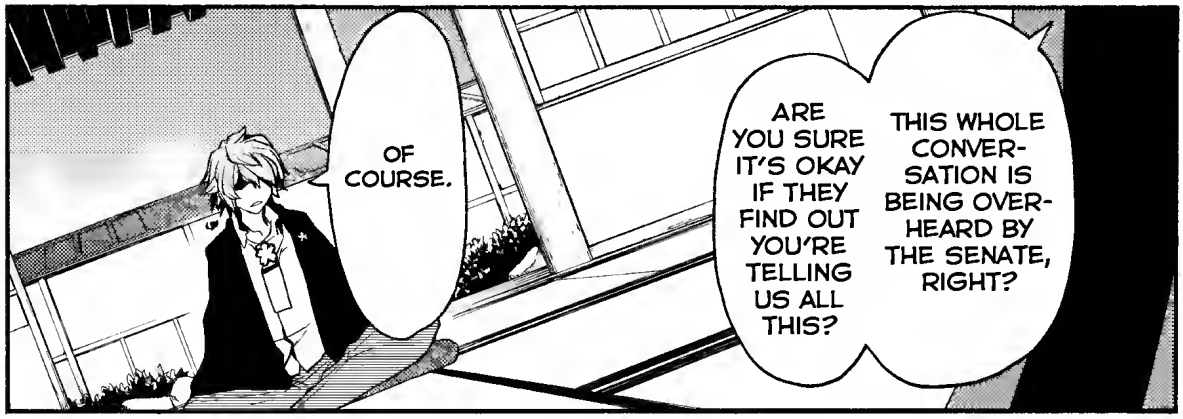

THIS WAS FOUND NEXT TO DIRECTOR SHIDARE'S HOSPITAL BED.
HUH? ERR...
?

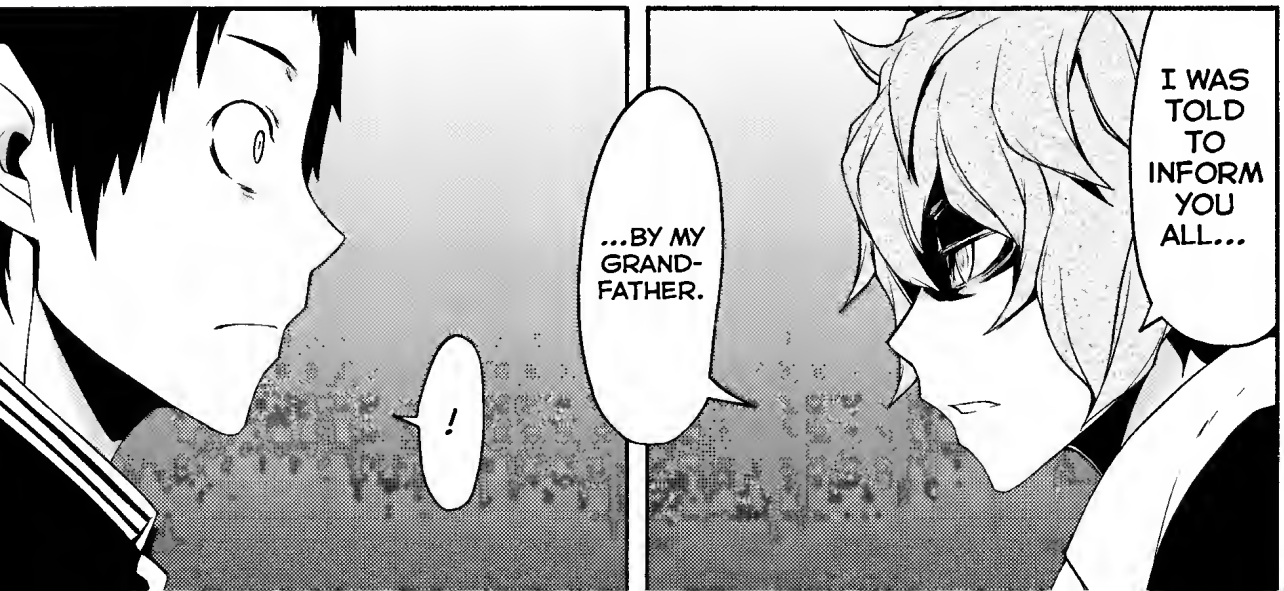
BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE ABLE TO TRACK SHIDARE-SAN DOWN WITH THOSE CHIPS?

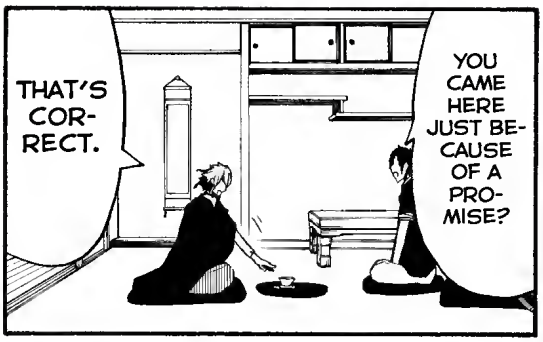

SNAP
...WE DON'T KNOW.

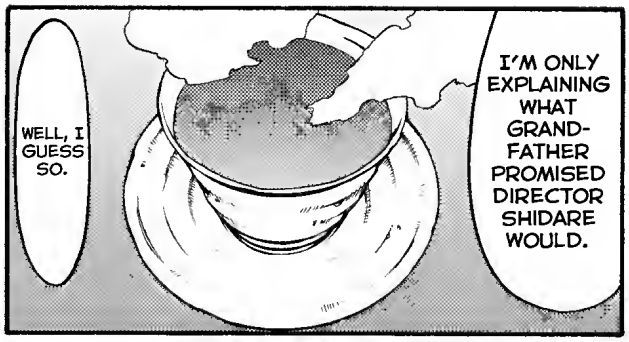

SO, AS FOR HIS WHERE-ABOUTS ...
EEEK!
DUG OUT ...

SAY ...
...


OF COURSE.
ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY IF THEY FIND OUT YOU'RE TELLING US ALL THIS?
THIS WHOLE CONVER-SATION IS BEING OVER-HEARD BY THE SENATE, RIGHT?


I WAS TOLD TO INFORM YOU ALL...
...BY MY GRAND-FATHER.
!


YOU CAME HERE JUST BECAUSE OF A PROMISE?
THAT'S CORRECT.


I'M ONLY EXPLAINING WHAT GRANDFATHER PROMISED DIRECTOR SHIDARE WOULD.
WELL, I GUESS SO.

BREAKING PROMISES GOES AGAINST HIS BELIEFS, I PRESUME.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT...
...IT WAS MADE WITH THE GRANDSON OF HIS FORMER FRIEND.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE OLD MAN IYO...
SCRIT

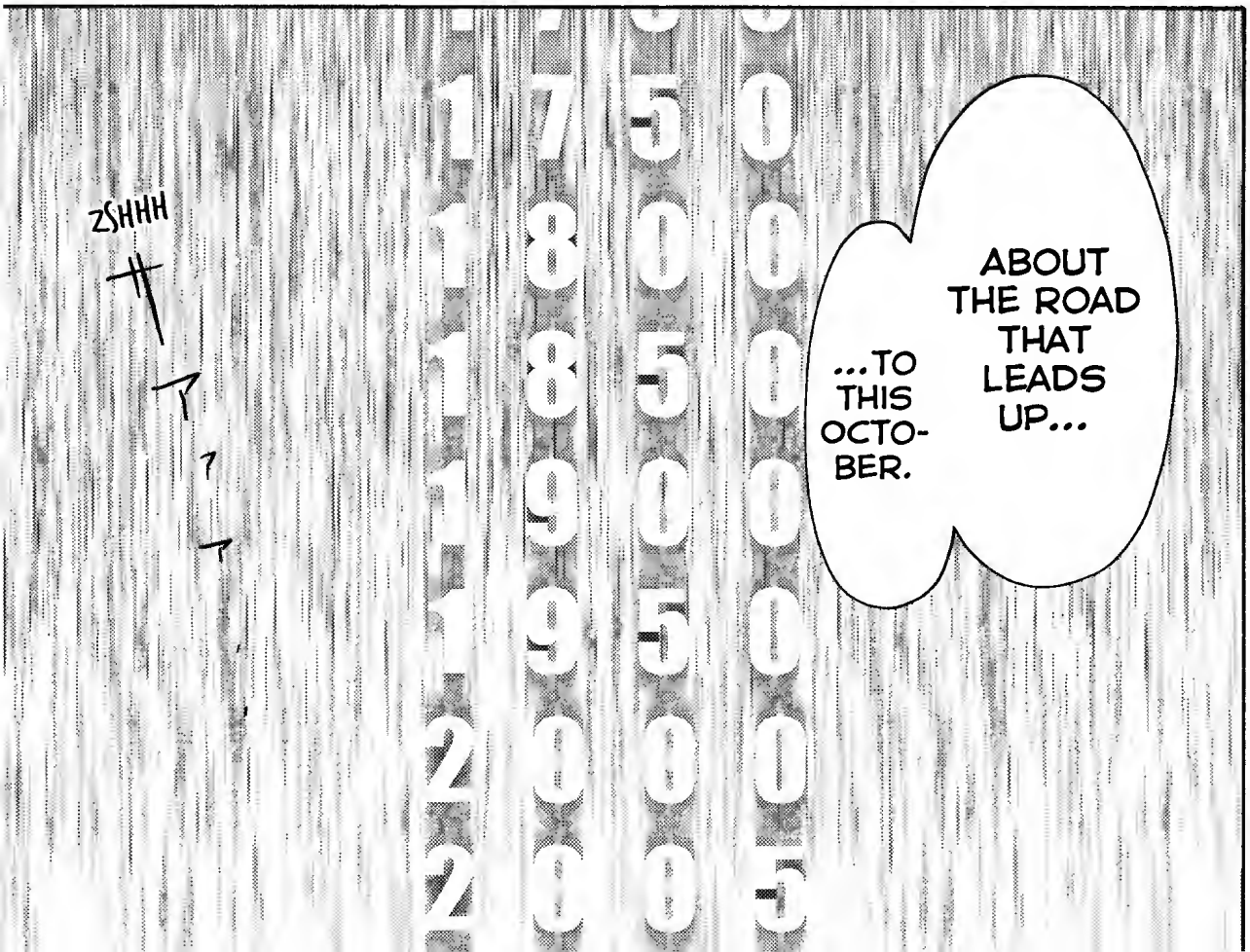
SIP
ずず…

WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU...
...
WHY?
WHAT?
!
TNK とん
WHAT I HAVE TO SAY NEXT,
I WAS TOLD TO SHARE ONLY WITH AKINA HIIZUMI.
...IS A STO-RY...
...THAT STRETCH-ES OVER THREE GENERA-TIONS...
...OF BOTH THE HIIZUMI AND IYO FAMILIES.

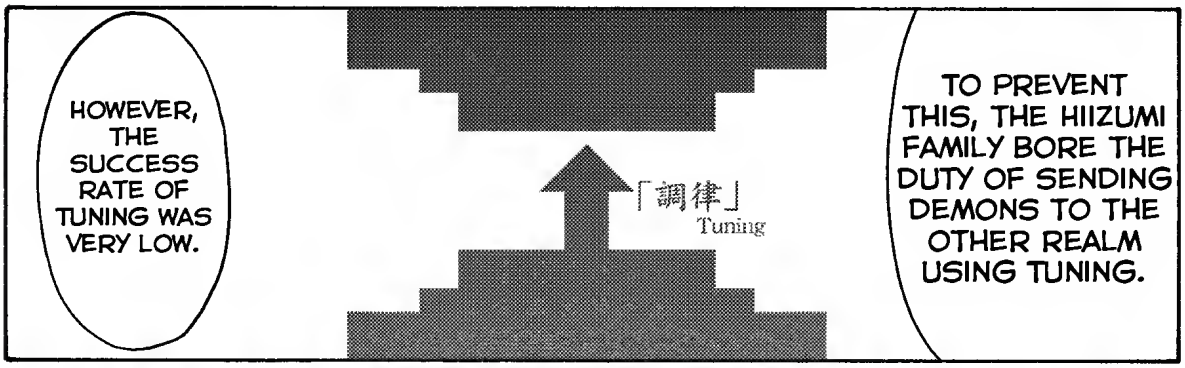
FIDG
FIDG
もじもじ
THAT'S CORRECT.
SO, YOU WON'T CONTINUE UNLESS WE LEAVE?
YANK
WHO CARES?
WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER. THERE'S NO WAY I'D HIDE ANYTHING FROM THEM.
ANYTHING YOU TELL ME NOW, I'LL JUST TELL THE OTHERS LATER.
THAT'S RIGHT!
EVEN IF THAT MEANS I WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL YOU?

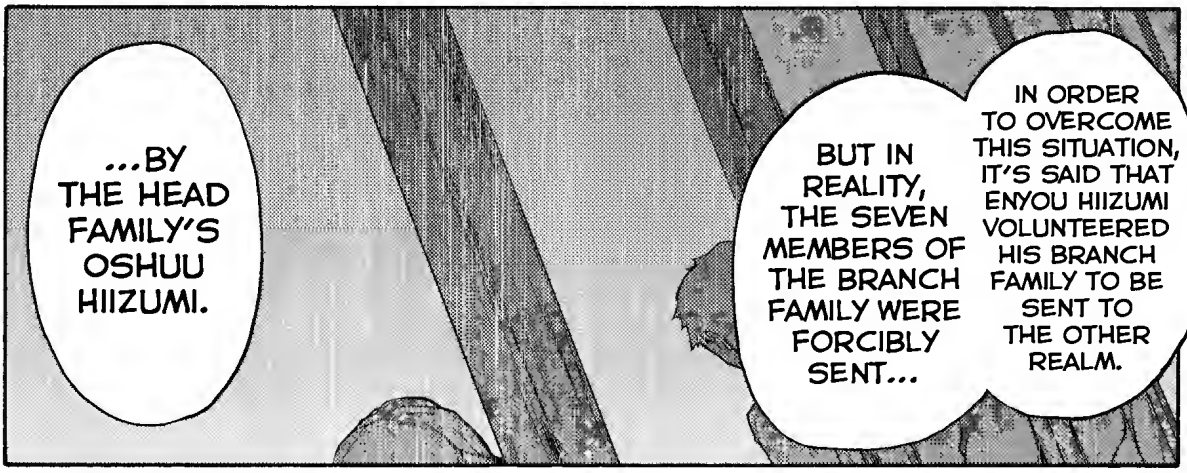
BEEP
ジ"ジ"ッ FZZ
YOU PROBABLY WANT TO ASK ABOUT WHAT WAS IN THE SENATE'S BASEMENT ...
HE READ YOU LIKE A BOOK.
HE SAID TO TELL YOU ANYWAY IN THAT EVENT.
SWIF
WELL ...
...GRAND-FATHER SUSPECTED YOU'D SAY THAT.
RSTL
RSTL

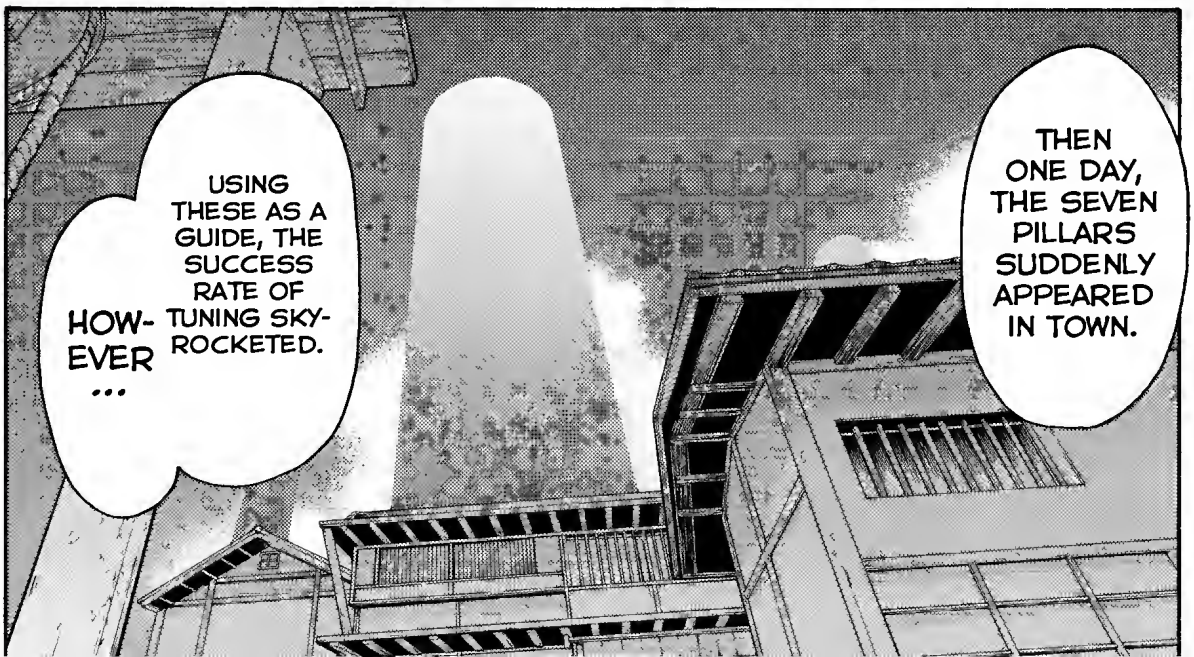
NOW LOADING.....
VWOON
...BUT ALLOW ME TO START FROM THE BEGIN-NING.

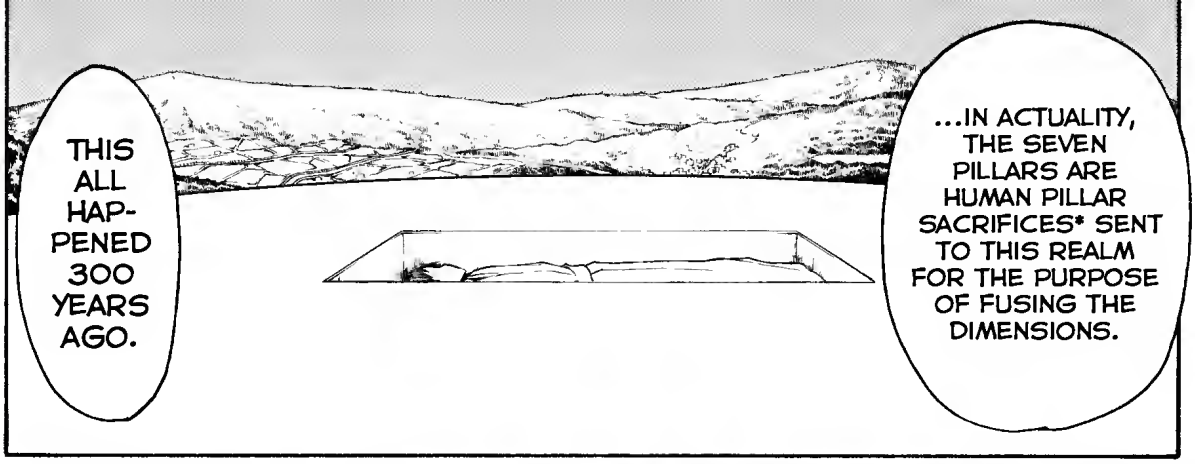

ZSHHH
ABOUT THE ROAD THAT LEADS UP...
...TO THIS OCTO-BER.

FOR STARTERS, DEMONS ARE NOT OF THIS WORLD.
BY EXISTING IN THIS REALM, THE ORIGINALLY IMMORTAL DEMONS GRADUALLY BEGIN TO SLIP OUT OF SYNC, GO BERSERK, AND EVENTUALLY SUCCUMB TO DEATH.

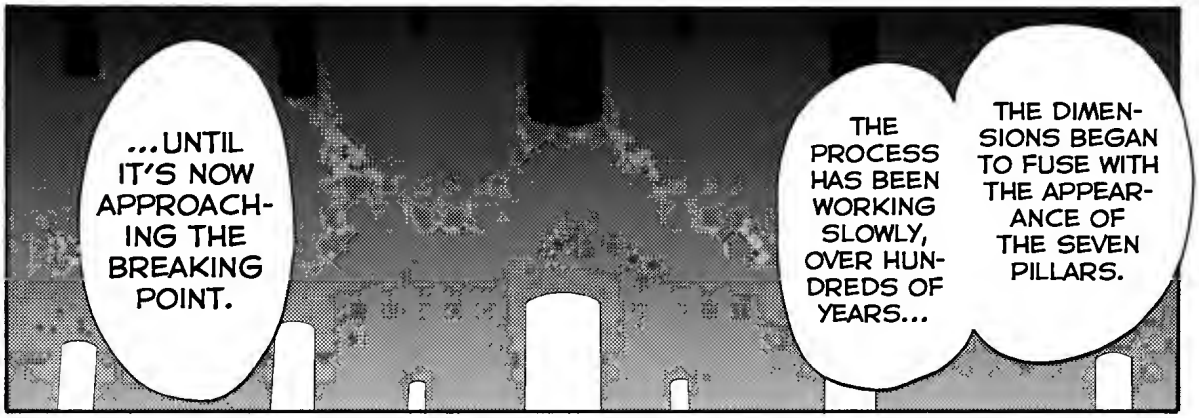

TO PREVENT THIS, THE HIIZUMI FAMILY BORE THE DUTY OF SENDING DEMONS TO THE OTHER REALM USING TUNING.
「調律」
Tuning
HOWEVER, THE SUCCESS RATE OF TUNING WAS VERY LOW.


IN ORDER TO OVERCOME THIS SITUATION, IT'S SAID THAT ENYOU HIIZUMI VOLUNTEERED HIS BRANCH FAMILY TO BE SENT TO THE OTHER REALM.
BUT IN REALITY, THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE BRANCH FAMILY WERE FORCIBLY SENT...
...BY THE HEAD FAMILY'S OSHUU HIIZUMI.


THEN ONE DAY, THE SEVEN PILLARS SUDDENLY APPEARED IN TOWN.
USING THESE AS A GUIDE, THE SUCCESS RATE OF TUNING SKY-ROCKETED.
HOW-EVER ...



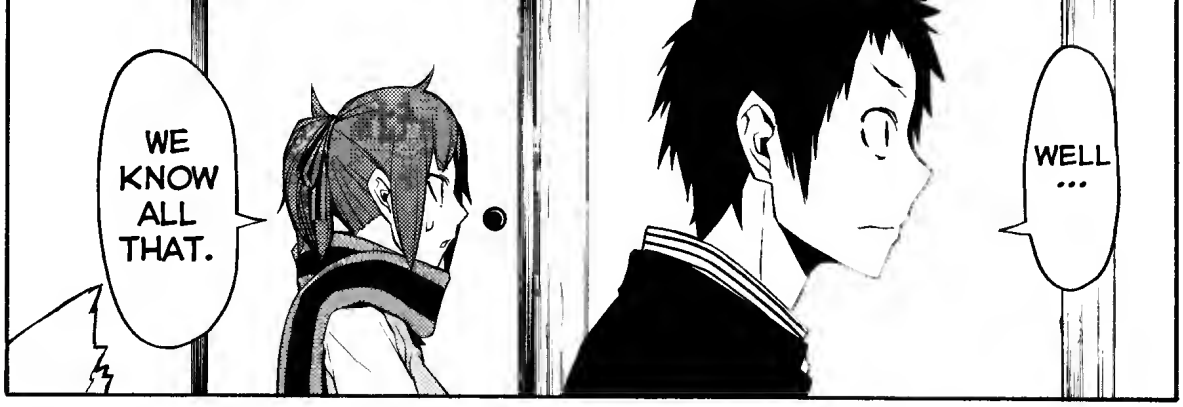
*A type of human sacrifice in which a person is buried alive under or near structures as a prayer to the gods.



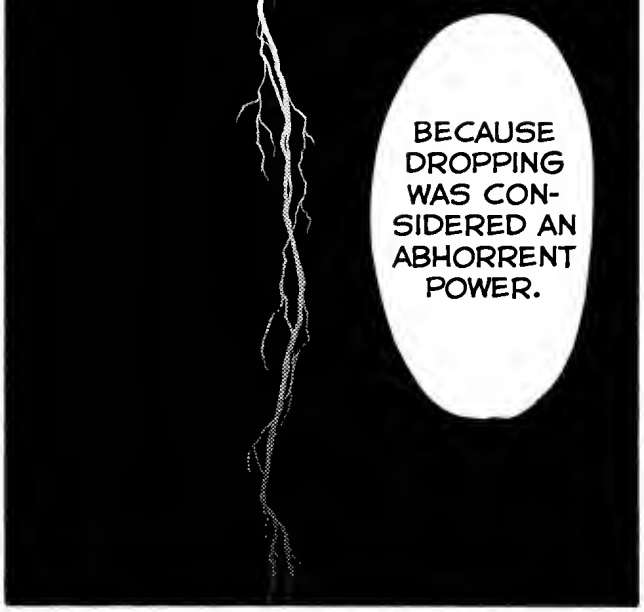
...ENJIN HIIZUMI.
...WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE DESCEN-DANT OF ENYOU HIIZUMI...
BUT HAVING TAKEN OVER GIN'S BODY, THE ONE TO RETURN TO THIS REALM...

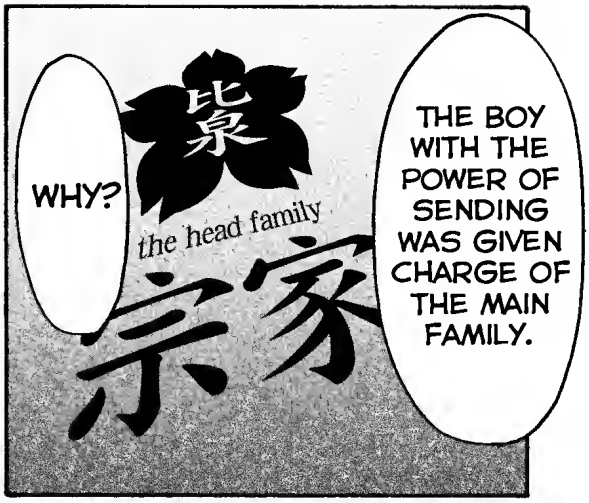
...ENJIN HOPES TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF DIMENSIONAL FUSION IN OCTOBER.
十月
「神無月」
Month of Gods
October
AND NOW WITH HIS SIGHTS SET ON THE MONTH OF GODS, WHEN THE GODS LEAVE THIS TOWN...

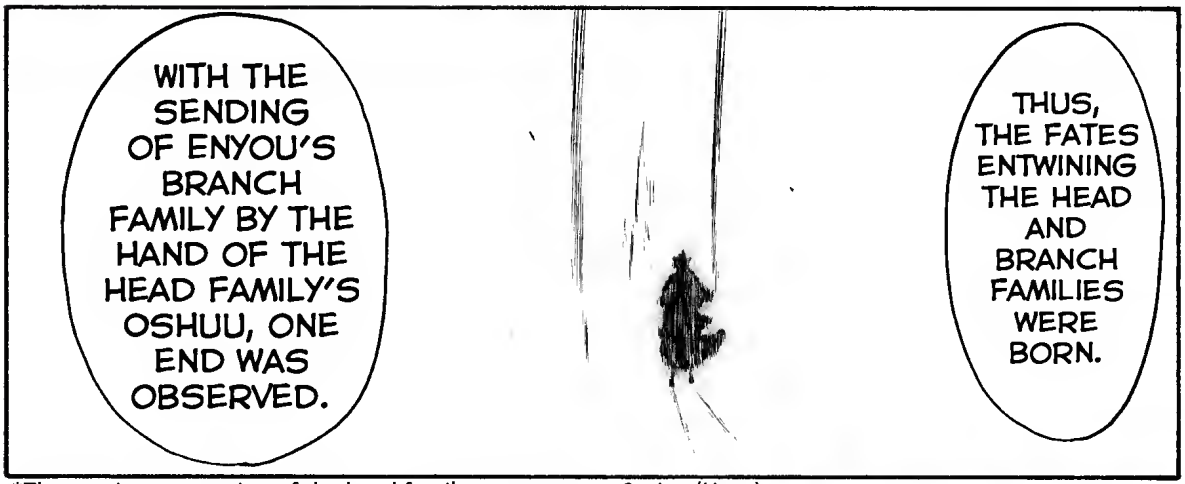
THIS IS...
...THE SUMMARY OF EVENTS LEADING TO THIS OCTOBER.
シュカ...
SWISH



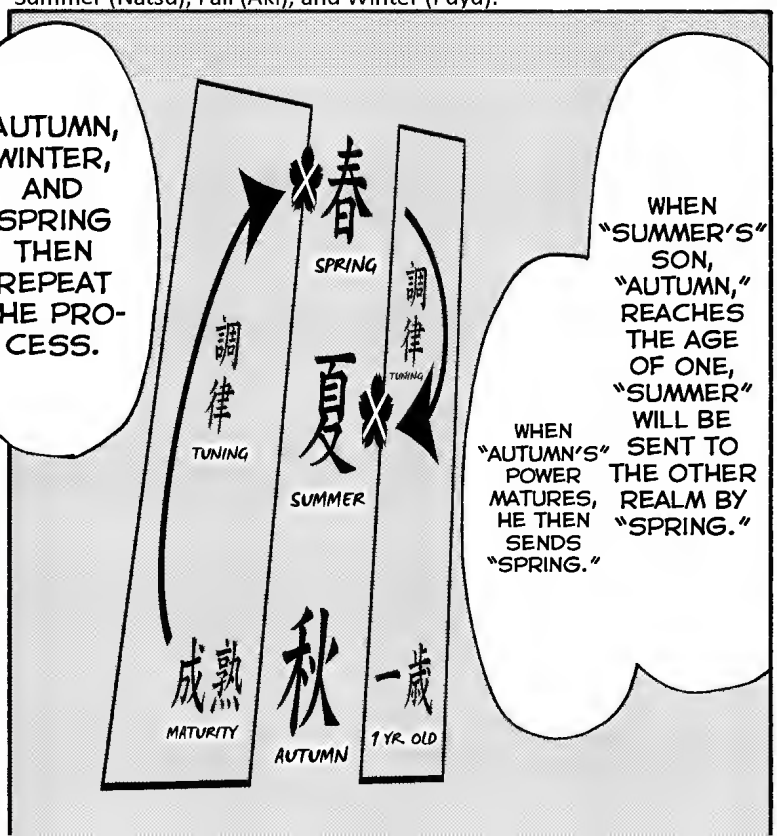
Flower: Hiizumi

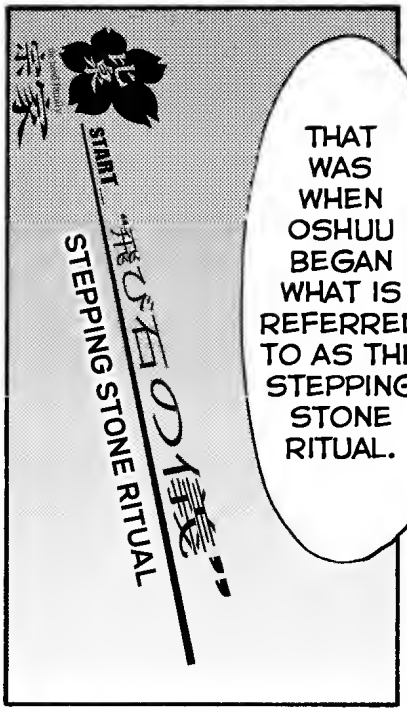




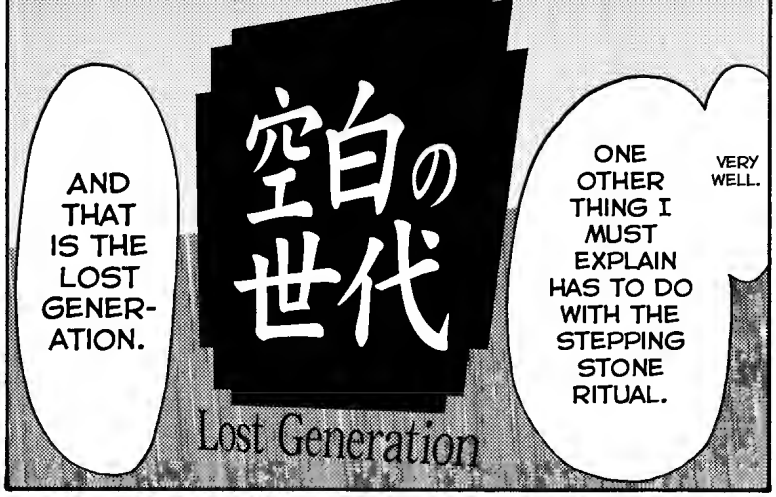


*The naming convention of the head family uses seasons. Spring (Haru), Summer (Natsu), Fall (Aki), and Winter (Fuyu).

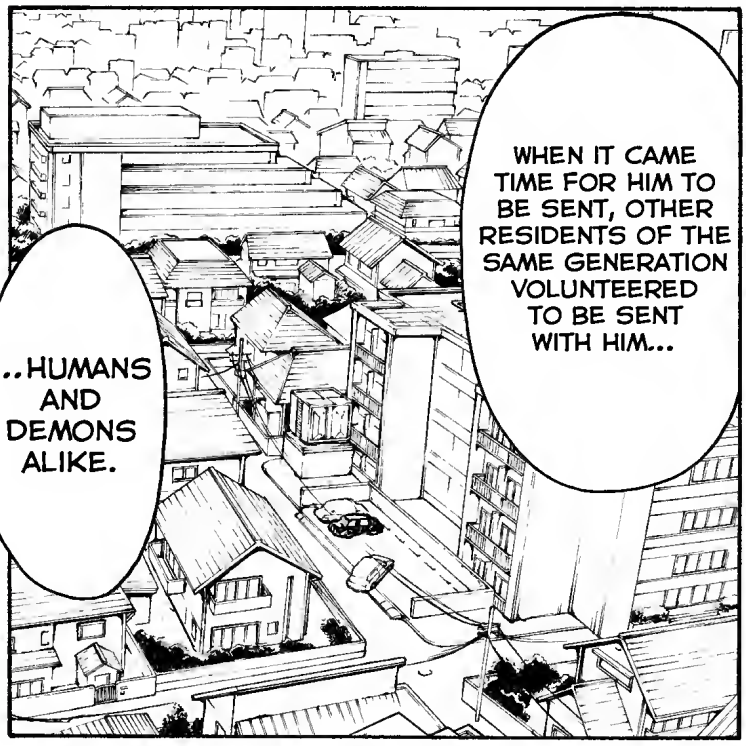




PLAGUED BY REMORSE, OSHUU CREATED THIS RITUAL IN AN ATTEMPT TO ATONE FOR HIS SINS.
...
THE OSHUU TOMOE-SAN SHOWED US OF THAT DAY...
WAS HE REALLY REMORSE-FUL?

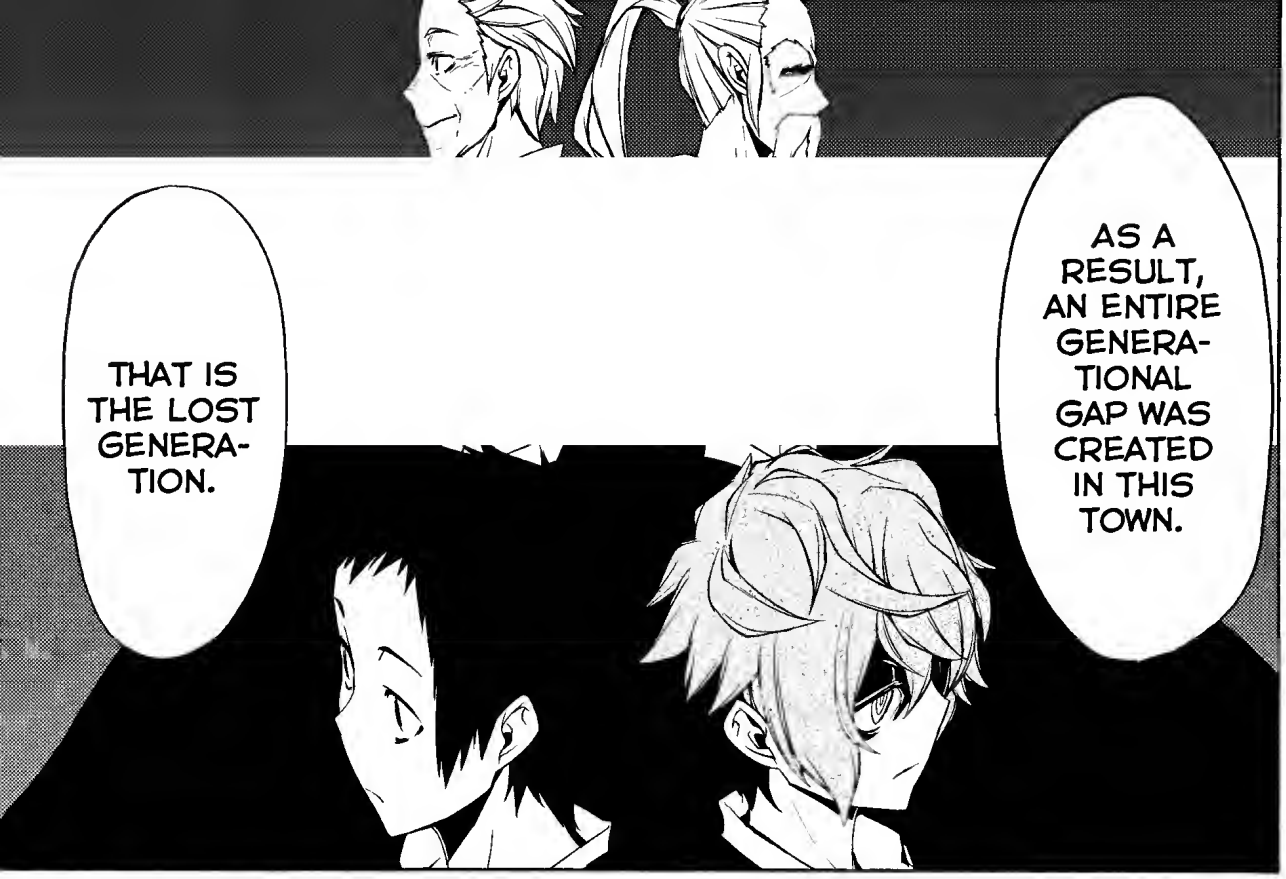

空白の世代
Lost Generation
AND THAT IS THE LOST GENER-ATION.
ONE OTHER THING I MUST EXPLAIN HAS TO DO WITH THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL.
VERY WELL.

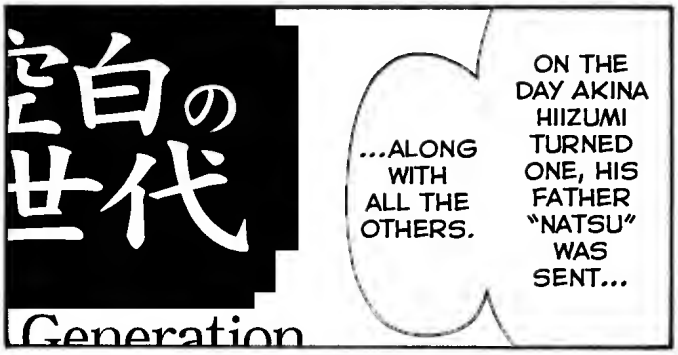
SOME-THING WRONG?
NO.
PLEASE CONTI-NUE.


WHEN IT CAME TIME FOR HIM TO BE SENT, OTHER RESIDENTS OF THE SAME GENERATION VOLUNTEERED TO BE SENT WITH HIM...
...HUMANS AND DEMONS ALIKE.

THE HII-ZUMI BEAR-ING THE NAME "NATSU" FOR SUM-MER.
MAKIHARU HIIZUMI'S SON, AND AKINA HIIZUMI'S FATHER.

IN-CLUD-ING...
...ALL OF YOUR PAR-ENTS.

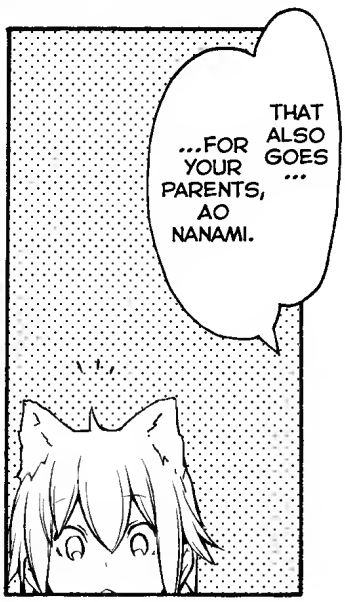

AS A RESULT, AN ENTIRE GENERA-TIONAL GAP WAS CREATED IN THIS TOWN.
THAT IS THE LOST GENERA-TION.

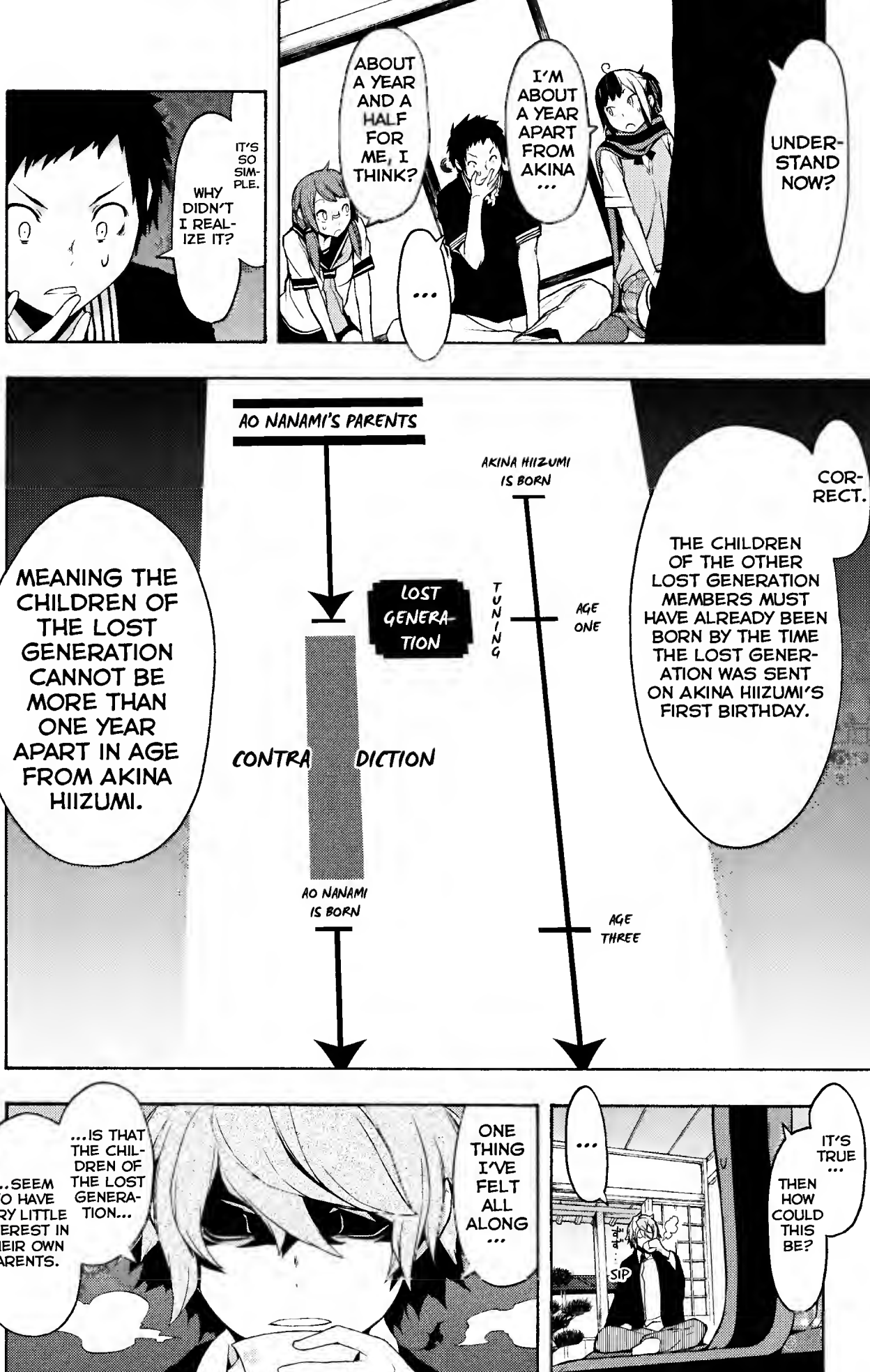

白の世代
Generation
ON THE DAY AKINA HIIZUMI TURNED ONE, HIS FATHER "NATSU" WAS SENT...
...ALONG WITH ALL THE OTHERS.

HOW-EVER, WE'RE LEFT WITH A CONTRA-DICTION.

!

HUH?
UHH, ONE, TWO... THREE YEARS?
LET ME ASK YOU, HOW FAR APART IN AGE ARE YOU FROM AKINA HIIZUMI?


THAT ALSO GOES ...
...FOR YOUR PARENTS, AO NANAMI.

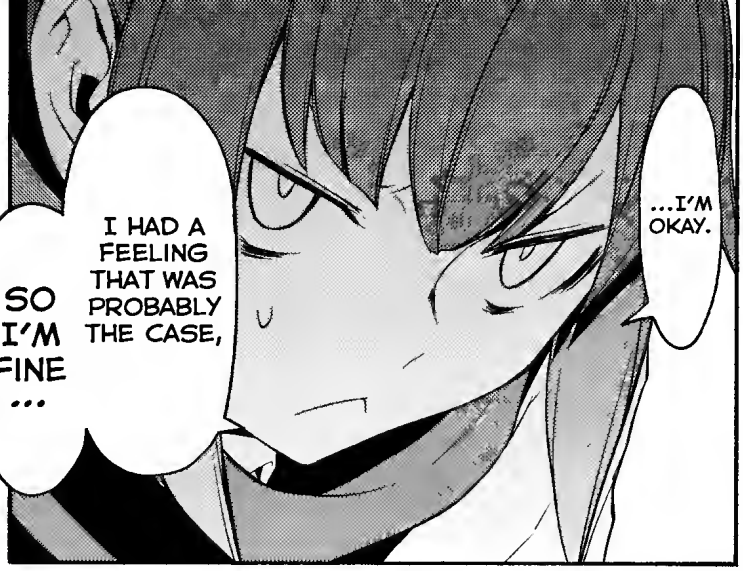

UNDER-STAND NOW?
I'M ABOUT A YEAR APART FROM AKINA ...
ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF FOR ME, I THINK?
...
IT'S SO SIM-PLE.
WHY DIDN'T I REAL-IZE IT?
AO NANAMI'S PARENTS
AKINA HIIZUMI IS BORN
LOST GENERA-TION
TUNING
AGE ONE
CONTRA DICTION
AO NANAMI IS BORN
AGE THREE
MEANING THE CHILDREN OF THE LOST GENERATION CANNOT BE MORE THAN ONE YEAR APART IN AGE FROM AKINA HIIZUMI.
COR-RECT.
THE CHILDREN OF THE OTHER LOST GENERATION MEMBERS MUST HAVE ALREADY BEEN BORN BY THE TIME THE LOST GENER-ATION WAS SENT ON AKINA HIIZUMI'S FIRST BIRTHDAY.
ONE THING I'VE FELT ALL ALONG ...
...IS THAT THE CHIL-DREN OF THE LOST GENERA-TION...
...SEEM TO HAVE VERY LITTLE INTEREST IN THEIR OWN PARENTS.
...
IT'S TRUE ...
THEN HOW COULD THIS BE?
SIP

PROBABLY BECAUSE THE TOWN WORKED TOGETHER TO FILL THE GAP LEFT BY THE LOST GENERATION.
AND WHY IS THAT?
WE'RE AWARE.
WELL ...
IT USED TO BE THAT CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT UP BY THEIR COMMUNITY.
THE OLD MAN WHO WILL TELL YOU OFF IF YOU DO SOMETHING BAD.
GOS-SIPING NEIGH-BOR-HOOD GRAN-NIES.
THE FRIENDLY LADY NEXT DOOR.
THEY'RE CONCEPTS THAT HAVE ALL BUT BEEN LOST IN MODERN SOCIETY.
THIS TOWN INTEN-TIONALLY TRIED TO STRENGTHEN THAT IDEA.
"EVEN WITHOUT PARENTS, CHILDREN WILL GROW."
FROM THAT CAME THE SAYING,
THE LOST GENERA-TION...

THE FACT THAT YOU'RE BRINGING THAT UP NOW...
TNK
...MUST MEAN IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO...
...WITH WHAT WAS IN THE SENATE'S BASEMENT, RIGHT?!
ドドド
GULP
VWOM
OF COURSE.
IT'S IDENTICAL IN DIAMETER, HEIGHT, AND WEIGHT TO THE SEVEN PILLARS.
THE ONE DIFFERENCE...
ギギ
GRR
...IS THAT IT IS A DEVICE ...
...THAT IS ENTIRELY MANMADE.
SNAP

A HUMAN PILLAR SACRIFICE BUILT TO OPPOSE THE SEVEN PILLARS.
OUR ULTIMATE WEAPON, PILLAR ZERO.

...HUMAN PILLAR SACRI-FICE...
PILLAR ZERO ...
AND ...
I DARESAY I NEEDN'T EVEN EXPLAIN.
...WITH THE NAMES OF THE LOST GENERATION WRITTEN ON THEM.
YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THE DOORS ALONG ITS PERI-METER...
...ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE LOST GENERATION.
WITHIN EACH OF THOSE DOORS ...

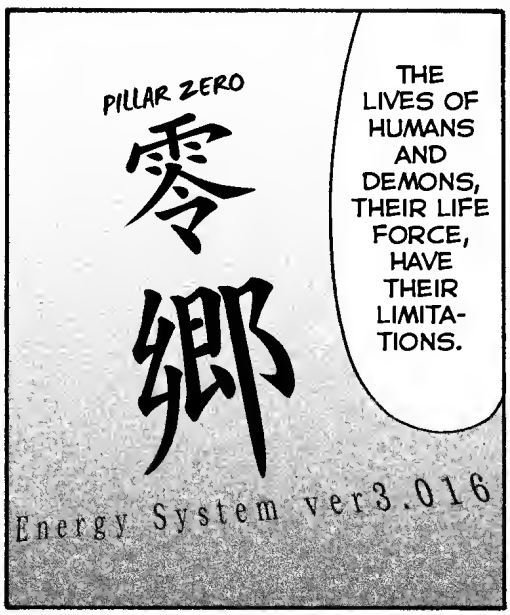

...I'M OKAY.
I HAD A FEELING THAT WAS PROBABLY THE CASE,
SO I'M FINE ...

CLENCH
HIME ...

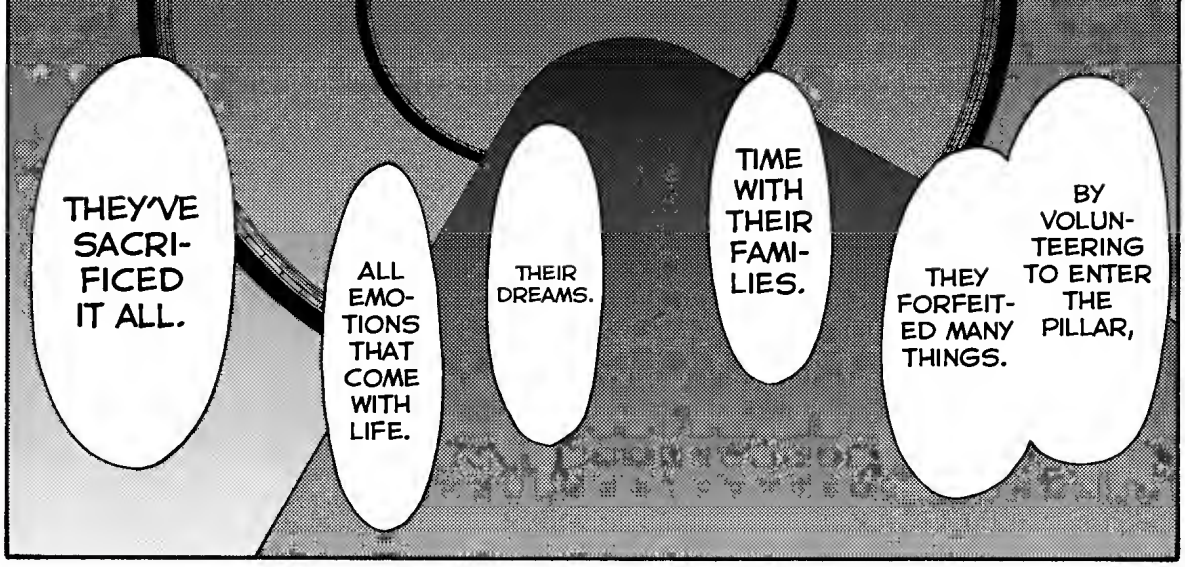
!

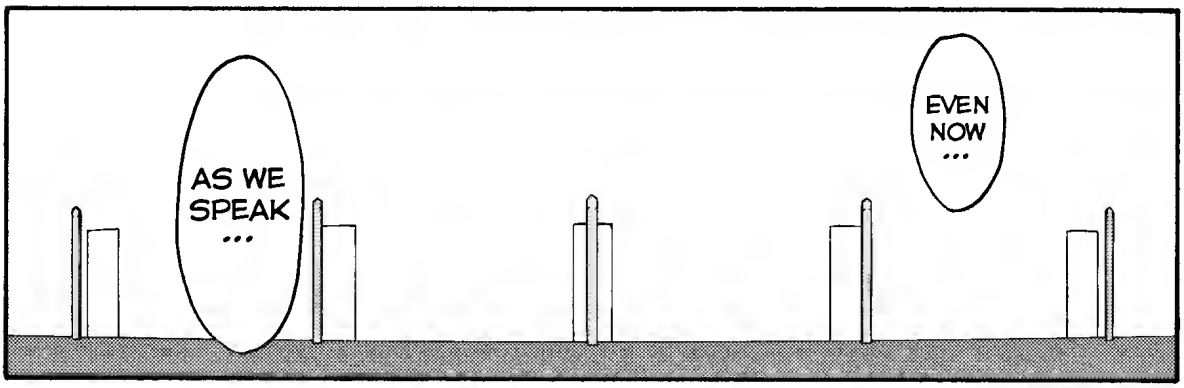
THEY'RE ALIVE.

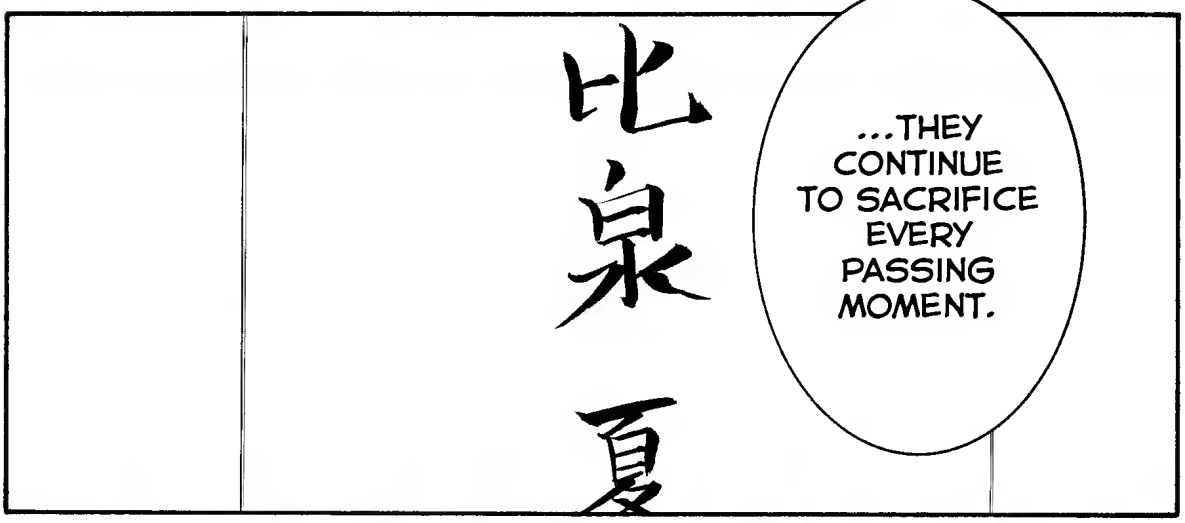
BY SACRIFICE, DO YOU MEAN THEY'RE ACTING AS AN ENERGY SOURCE LIKE THE OTHER SEVEN PILLARS?
ARE THE PEOPLE INSIDE... DEAD OR ALIVE?


PILLAR ZERO
零郷
Energy System ver3.016
THE LIVES OF HUMANS AND DEMONS, THEIR LIFE FORCE, HAVE THEIR LIMITATIONS.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
MORE ACCURATELY, THEY'RE "LIVING."



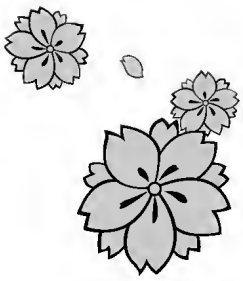


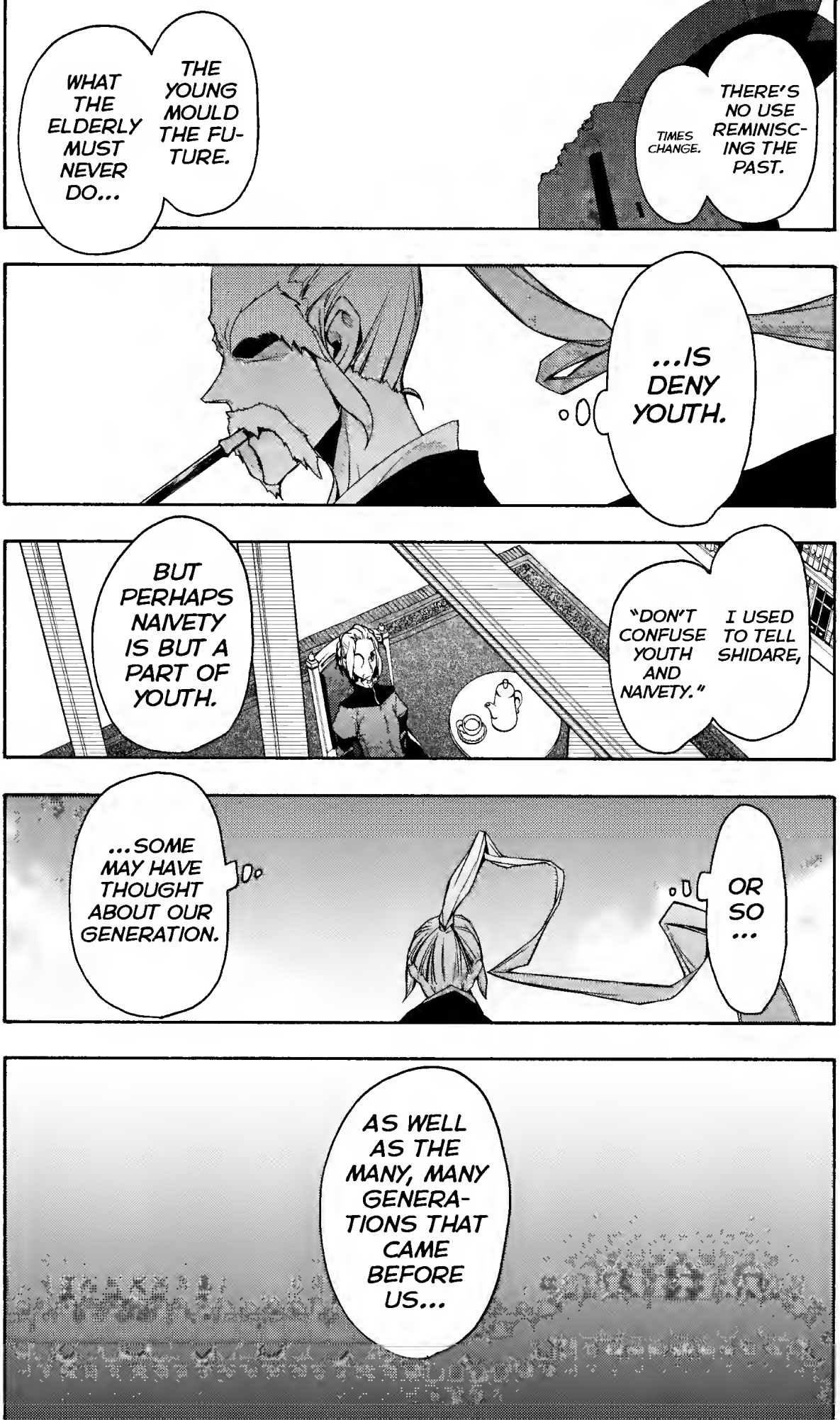


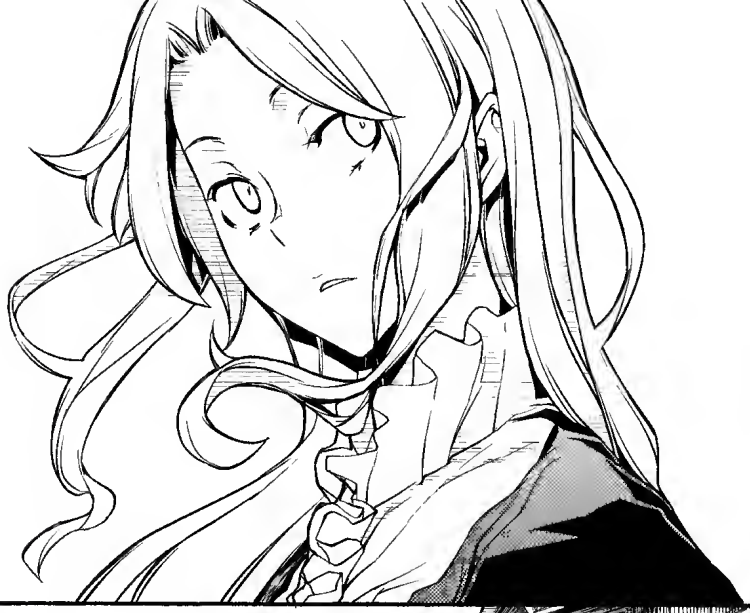
Door: Natsu Hiizumi

TO THIS DAY,
PILLAR ZERO CONTINUES TO STORE...
...EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEIR LIVES.

YOZAKURA
QUARTET
17




THERE'S NO USE REMINISCING THE PAST.
TIMES CHANGE.
THE YOUNG MOULD THE FUTURE.
WHAT THE ELDERLY MUST NEVER DO...
...IS DENY YOUTH.
I USED TO TELL SHIDARE, "DON'T CONFUSE YOUTH AND NAIVETY."
BUT PERHAPS NAIVETY IS BUT A PART OF YOUTH.
OR SO...
...SOME MAY HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT OUR GENERATION.
AS WELL AS THE MANY, MANY GENERATIONS THAT CAME BEFORE US...



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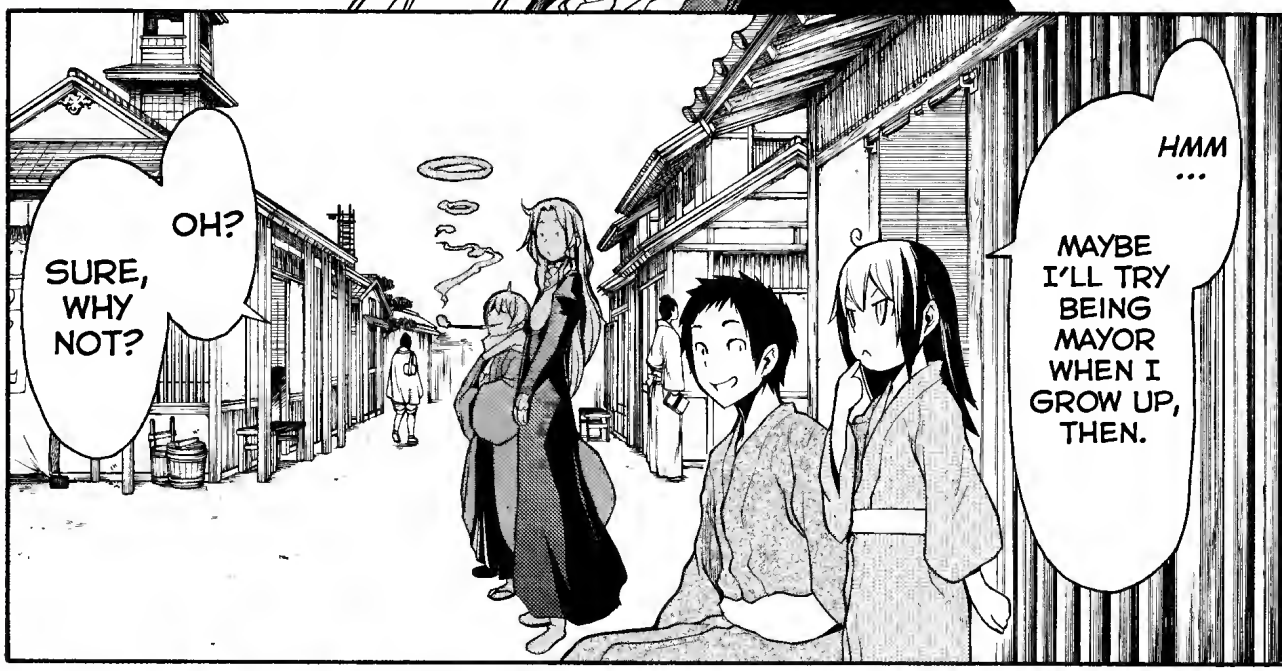
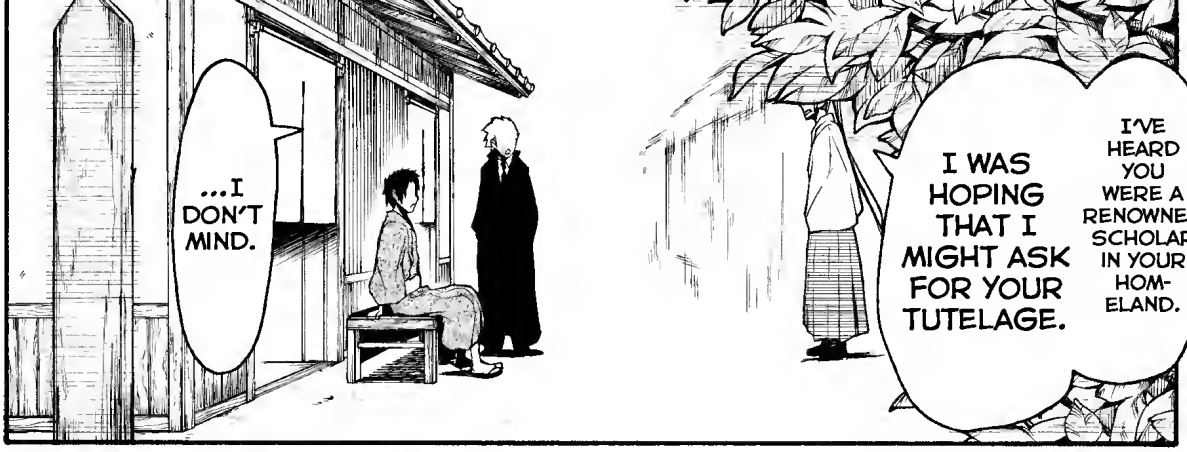
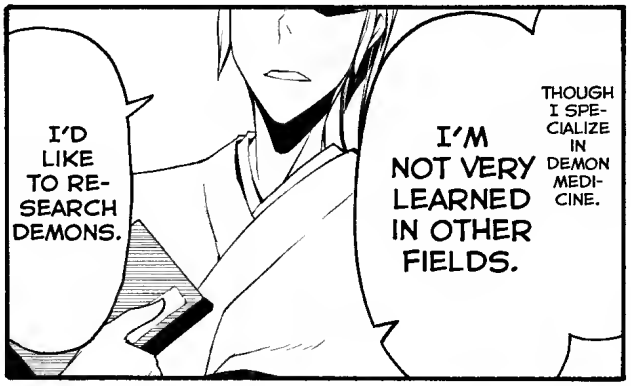

HMM...
MAYBE I'LL TRY BEING MAYOR WHEN I GROW UP, THEN.
OH?
SURE, WHY NOT?

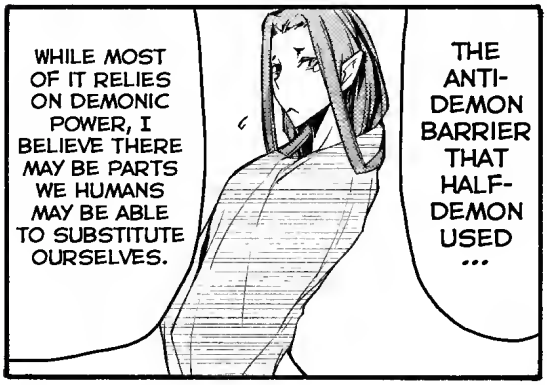
PRO-FES-SOR.
SKF

YES. I THINK SO, TOO.
THE BLOOD OF DRAG-ONS, EH? SHE MAY BE WELL-SUITED TO BRING THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN TO-GETHER.

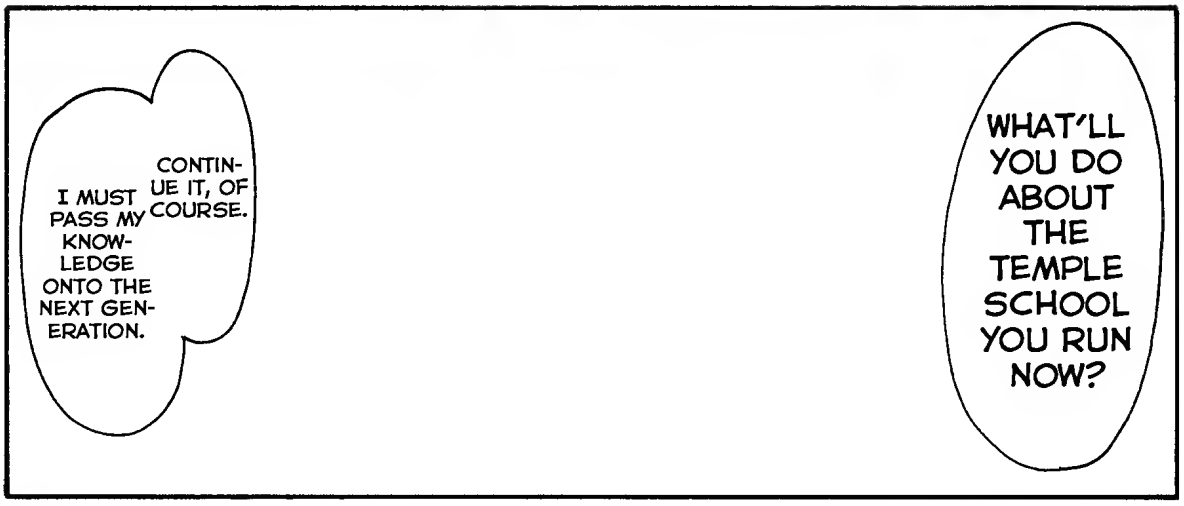
...HM.
I'M GONNA BE MAYOR!


I'VE HEARD YOU WERE A RENOWNED SCHOLAR IN YOUR HOMELAND.
I WAS HOPING THAT I MIGHT ASK FOR YOUR TUTELAGE.
...I DON'T MIND.


THOUGH I SPECIALIZE IN DEMON MEDICINE.
I'M NOT VERY LEARNED IN OTHER FIELDS.
I'D LIKE TO RESEARCH DEMONS.


THE ANTI-DEMON BARRIER THAT HALF-DEMON USED ...
WHILE MOST OF IT RELIES ON DEMONIC POWER, I BELIEVE THERE MAY BE PARTS WE HUMANS MAY BE ABLE TO SUBSTITUTE OURSELVES.

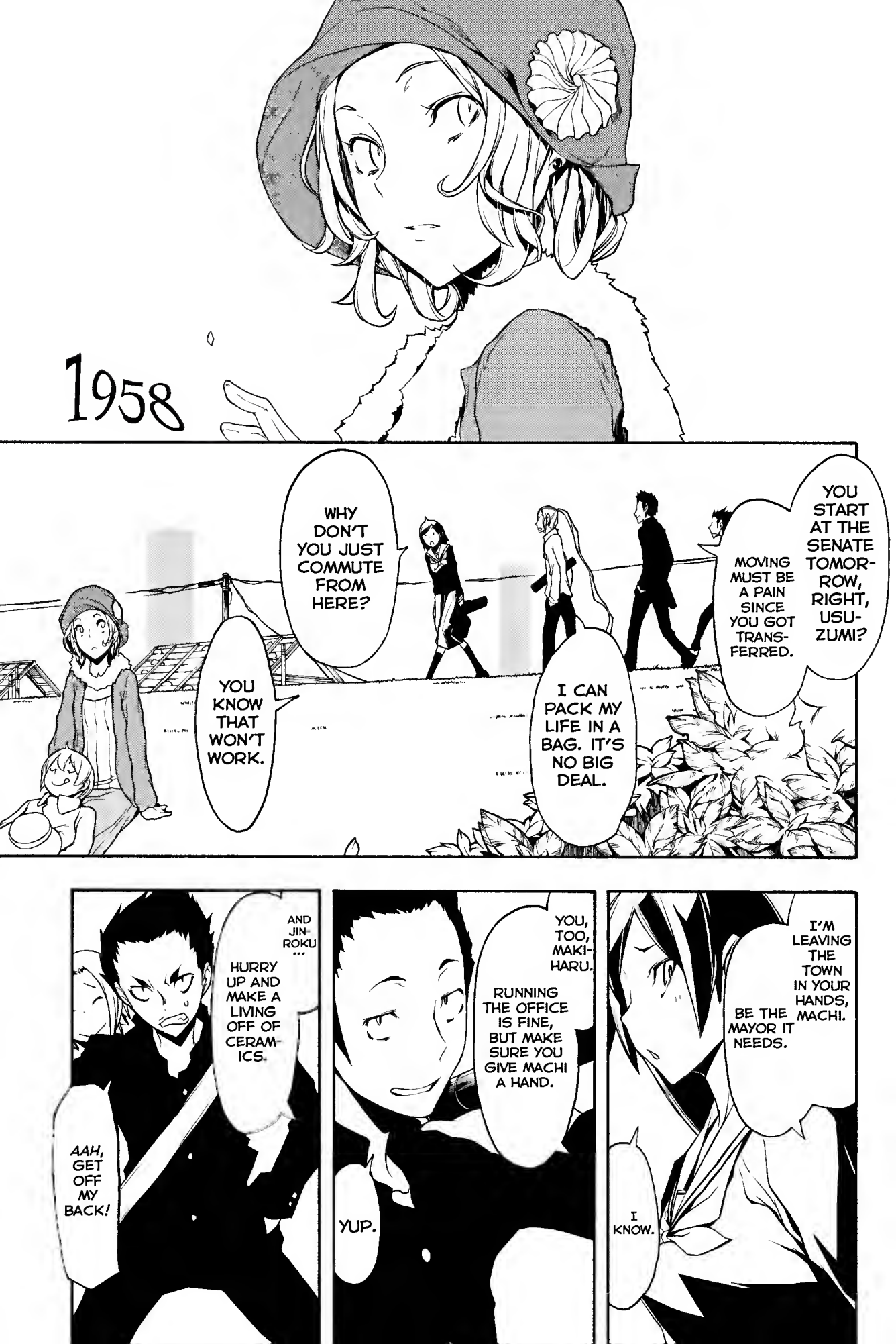
ALL RIGHT. I WORK AS A DOCTOR DURING THE DAY, BUT I WILL TEACH YOU IN THE EVENINGS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

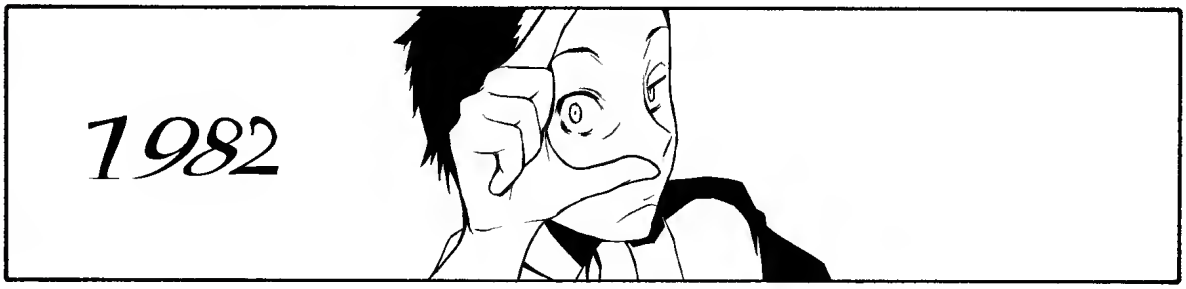

WHAT'LL YOU DO ABOUT THE TEMPLE SCHOOL YOU RUN NOW?
CONTINUE IT, OF COURSE. I MUST PASS MY KNOWLEDGE ONTO THE NEXT GENERATION.

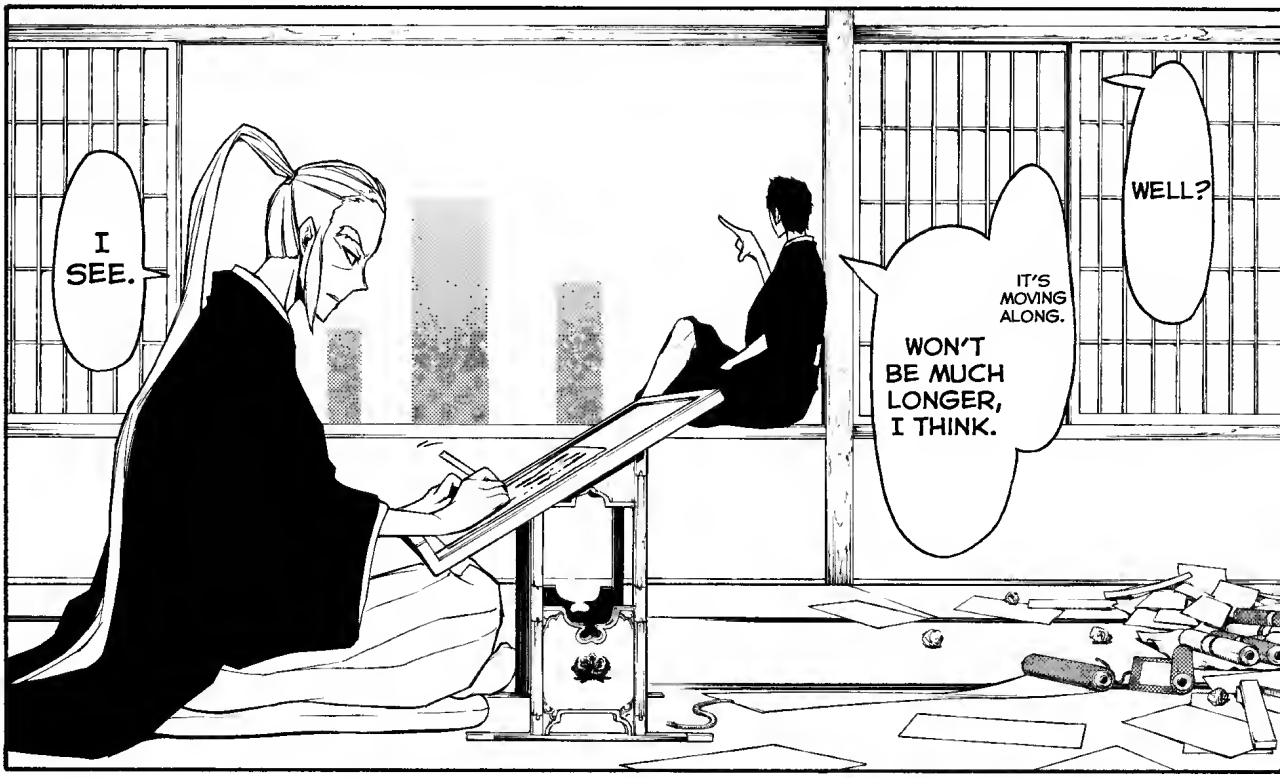
AND TO THE MANY MORE GENERATIONS TO COME...
#94 PAST AND PRESENT (PART TWO)
元老院
SENATE

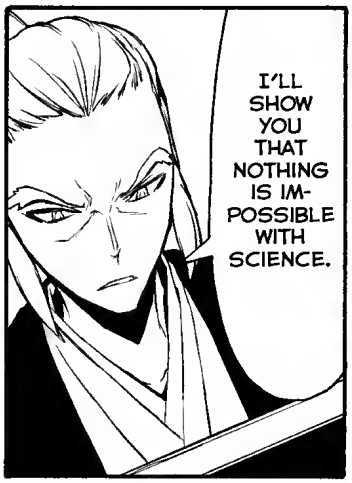
CHATTER
CHATTER
1882
CHATTER
CHATTER
PHEW, THAT'S BRIGHT.
HARD TO TELL WHETHER IT'S DAY OR NIGHT.
WOWIE
IN-DEED.
NOW THAT HUMANS HAVE ACQUIRED "LIGHT-NING,"
THE TIMES ARE GOING TO CHANGE IN A FLASH.
AND THE SENATE'S RESEARCH WILL MAKE TRACKS...

I WISH YOU'D HAVE SAID, "GOD CREATED LIFE."
BUT THAT AIN'T THE CASE.
ICCHAN, LIFE WAS FIRST CREATED FROM AMINO ACIDS AND LIGHTNING.
PROBABLY. ANYWAY.
REALLY?
WHY DON'T YOU PREDICT THE FUTURE?
CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, THOUGH.
...IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR HUMANS TO CREATE "LIFE."
WELL, NOW...
SOME GOD...
AAH, WHATEVER. LET'S GET SOME DRINKS!
THE CORNER BAR IN JINBO SOUNDS GOOD!
IT'S FUN BEING DRAGGED ALONG BY THE SURGES OF TIME.
NO WAY. THAT'S BORING.

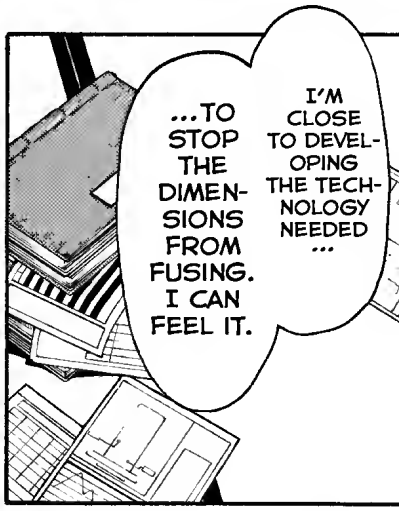

1958
YOU START AT THE SENATE TOMORROW, RIGHT, USUZUMI?
MOVING MUST BE A PAIN SINCE YOU GOT TRANSFERRED.
I CAN PACK MY LIFE IN A BAG. IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST COMMUTE FROM HERE?
YOU KNOW THAT WON'T WORK.
I'M LEAVING THE TOWN IN YOUR HANDS, MACHI.
BE THE MAYOR IT NEEDS.
I KNOW.
YOU, TOO, MAKIHARU.
RUNNING THE OFFICE IS FINE, BUT MAKE SURE YOU GIVE MACHI A HAND.
YUP.
AND JINROKU...
HURRY UP AND MAKE A LIVING OFF OF CERAMICS.
AAH, GET OFF MY BACK!


1982


I SEE.
WELL?
IT'S MOVING ALONG.
WON'T BE MUCH LONGER, I THINK.


I'LL SHOW YOU THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH SCIENCE.

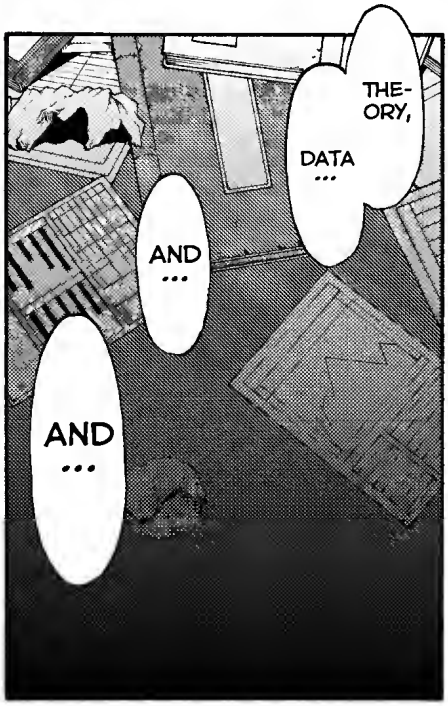
I WON'T GET MY HOPES UP.


I'M CLOSE TO DEVELOPING THE TECHNOLOGY NEEDED ...
...TO STOP THE DIMENSIONS FROM FUSING. I CAN FEEL IT.

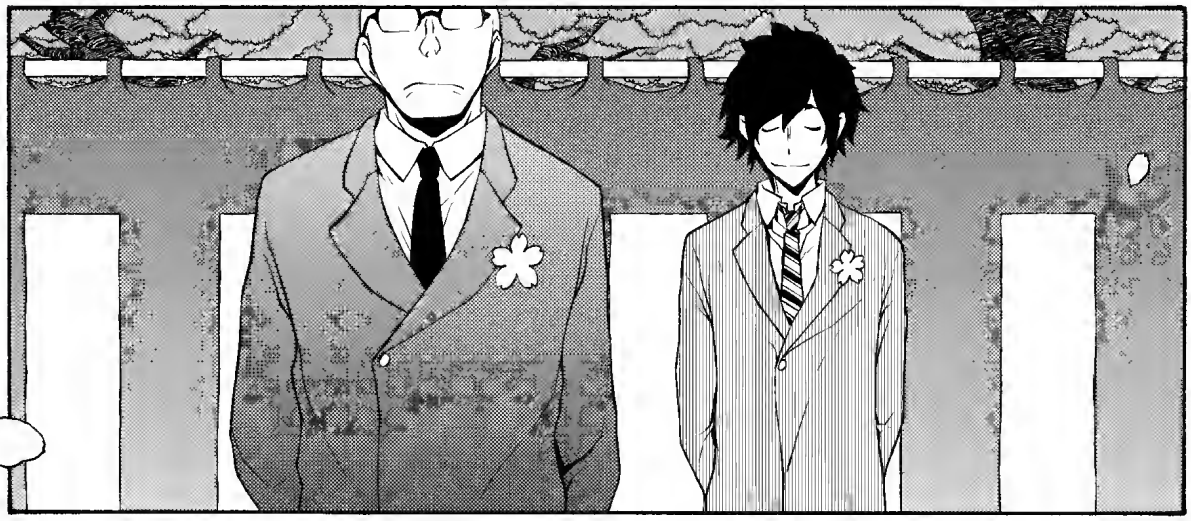
WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON? IS HE GOING TO JOIN THE OFFICE?
WHO KNOWS?
HE'S AN ALOOF KID, JUST LIKE ME.
I'D SAY HE'S DOING VERY WELL,
BUT HE HAS A LONG WAY TO GO.
OH, YEAH. I HEAR YOUR SON JOINED THE SENATE, USUZUMI.
THEY SAY HE'S AS BRIGHT AS HIS FATHER.
IT'S NOT LUDICROUS.
THAT'S BECAUSE ...
...THAT LUDICROUS STEPPING STONE RITUAL AWAITS HIM.
WHO CAN BLAME HIM?
SO, WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER.
I'LL MAKE THIS A PEACEFUL WORLD WHERE THAT RITUAL IS NO LONGER NECESSARY,
USING MANKIND'S KNOWLEDGE.
IT IS ...
11 4
CLICK

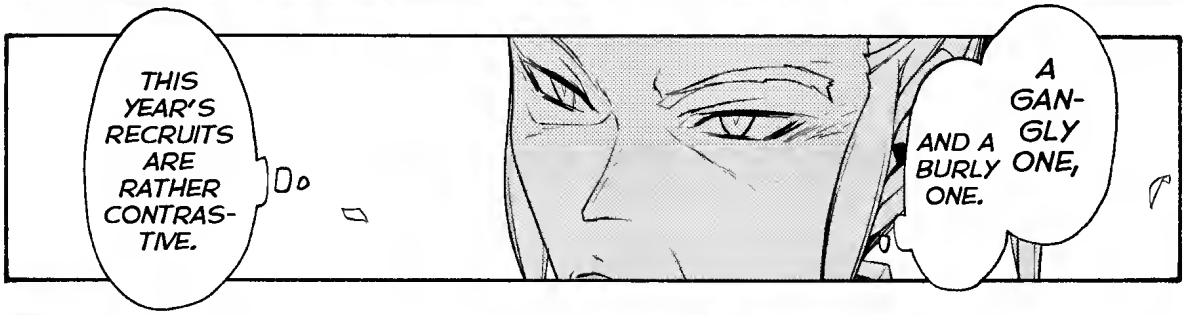
...I WON'T GET MY HOPES UP.

DAMN IT!
SNAP

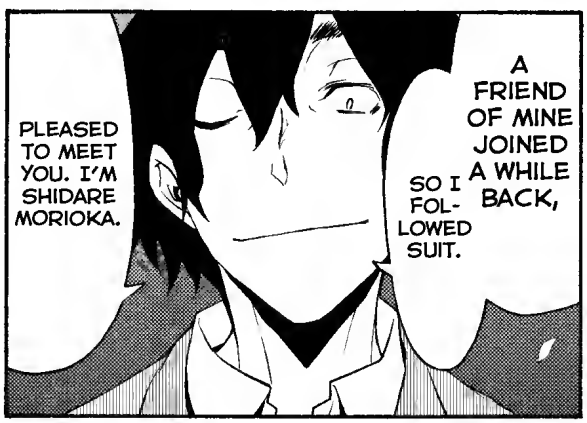

THE-ORY,
DATA ...
AND ...
AND ...

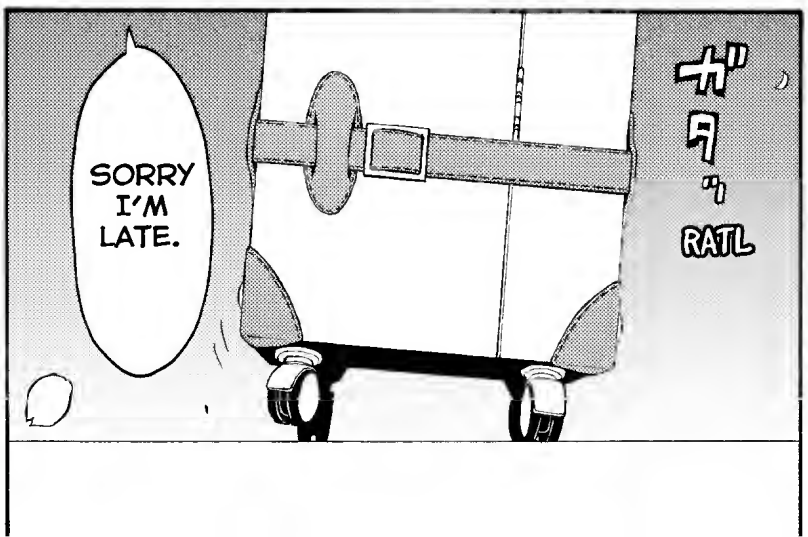
NO ...
I'M CLOSE, SO CLOSE,
BUT I'M MISSING SOME-THING...
GRIT
SOME-THING ...



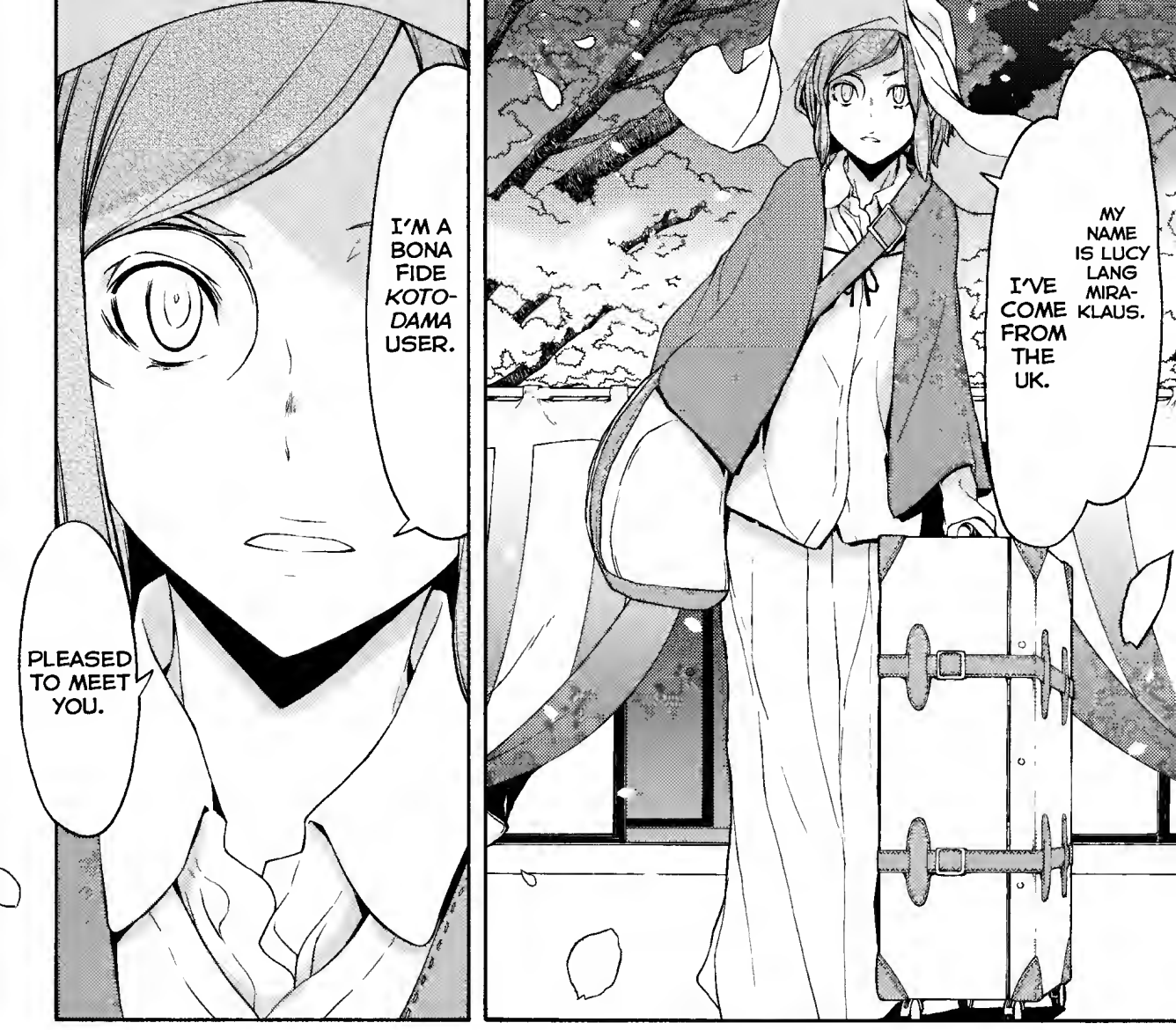

THIS YEAR'S RECRUITS ARE RATHER CONTRAS-TIVE.
A GAN-GLY ONE,
AND A BURLY ONE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORK-ING WITH YOU.
MY NAME IS UZU KIBUNE.

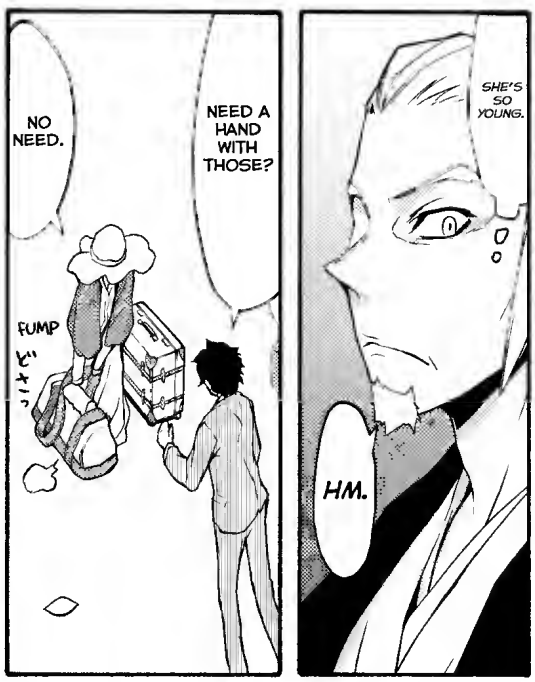

PLEASED TO MEET YOU. I'M SHIDARE MORIOKA.
SO I FOL-LOWED SUIT.
A FRIEND OF MINE JOINED A WHILE BACK,


SORRY I'M LATE.
ガタ
RATL

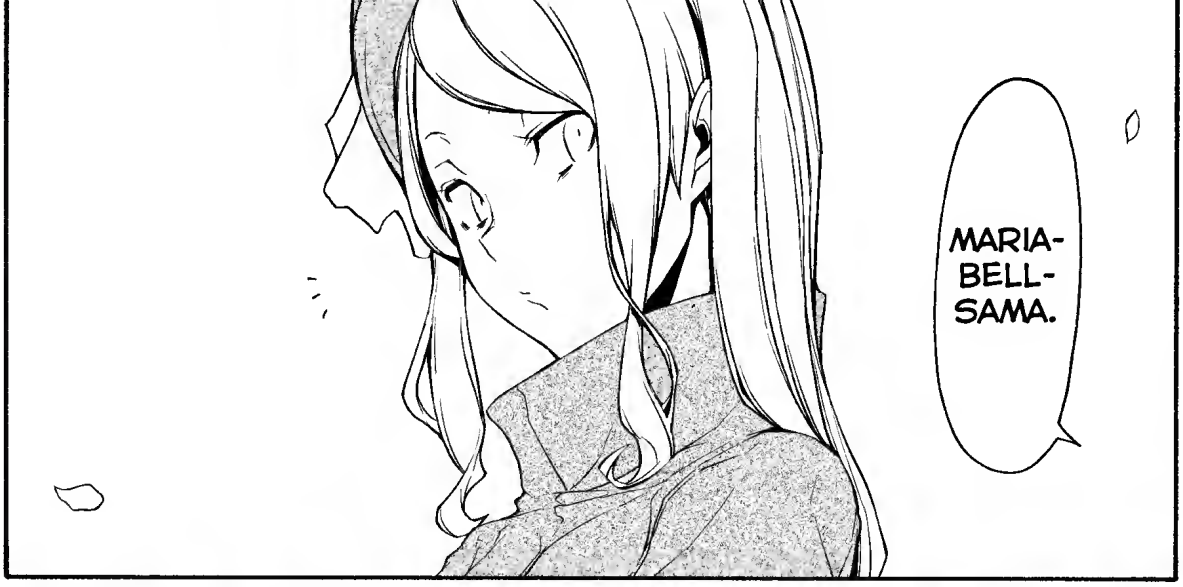
NOW,
WHERE'S THE LAST ONE?
ガラガラ
RATL
RATL

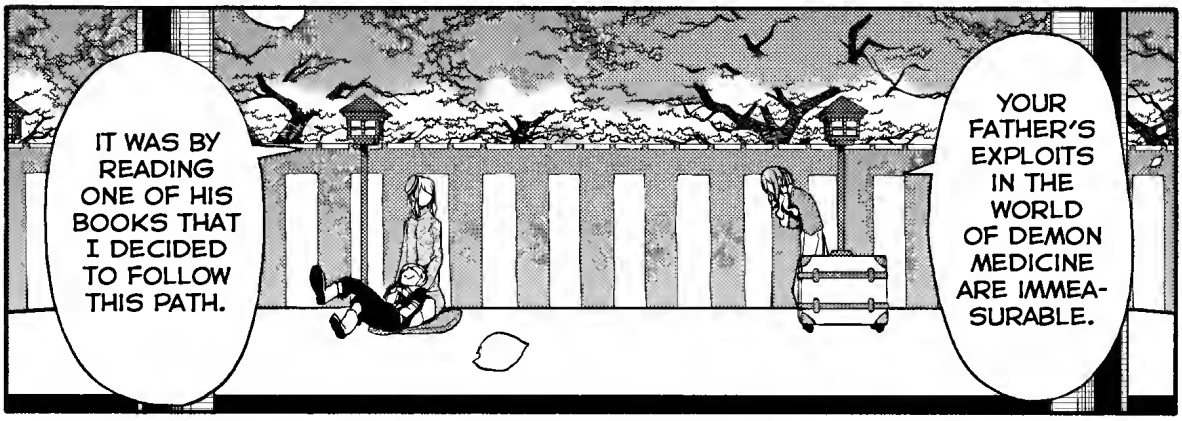

MY NAME IS LUCY LANG MIRA-KLAUS.
I'VE COME FROM THE UK.
I'M A BONA FIDE KOTO-DAMA USER.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

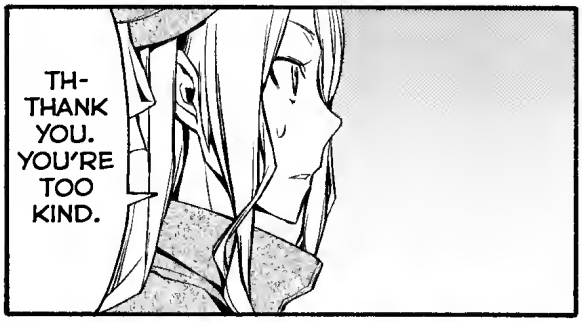
I DON'T EXPECT ANY-THING FROM A FAR EAST LAND...
...WHERE THE CON-CEPT OF BEING A GENTLE-MAN DOESN'T EXIST.


NEED A HAND WITH THOSE?
NO NEED.
FUMP
SHE'S SO YOUNG.
HM.

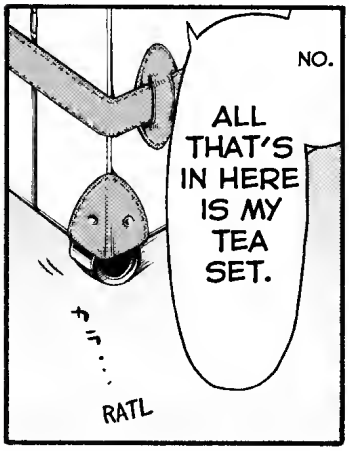
SWIF

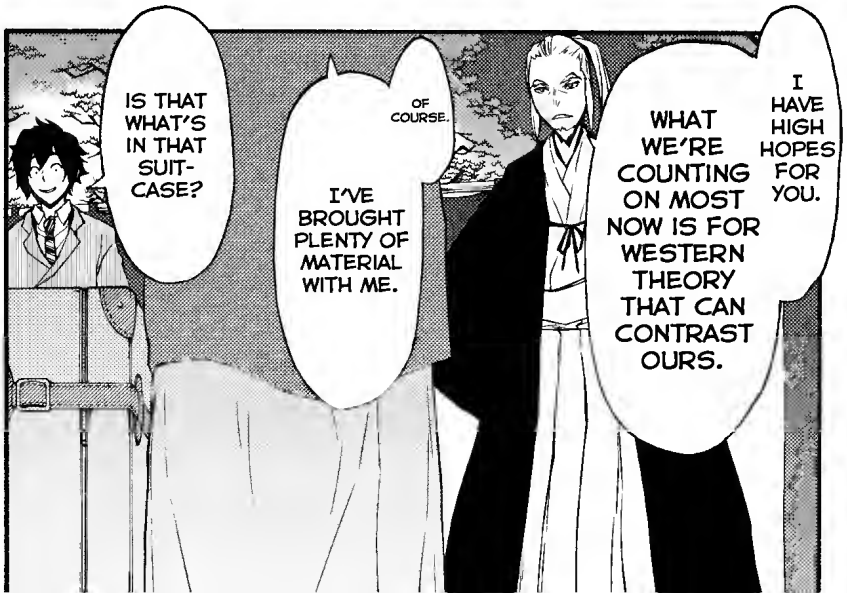

MARIA-BELL-SAMA.


IT WAS BY READING ONE OF HIS BOOKS THAT I DECIDED TO FOLLOW THIS PATH.
YOUR FATHER'S EXPLOITS IN THE WORLD OF DEMON MEDICINE ARE IMMEASURABLE.

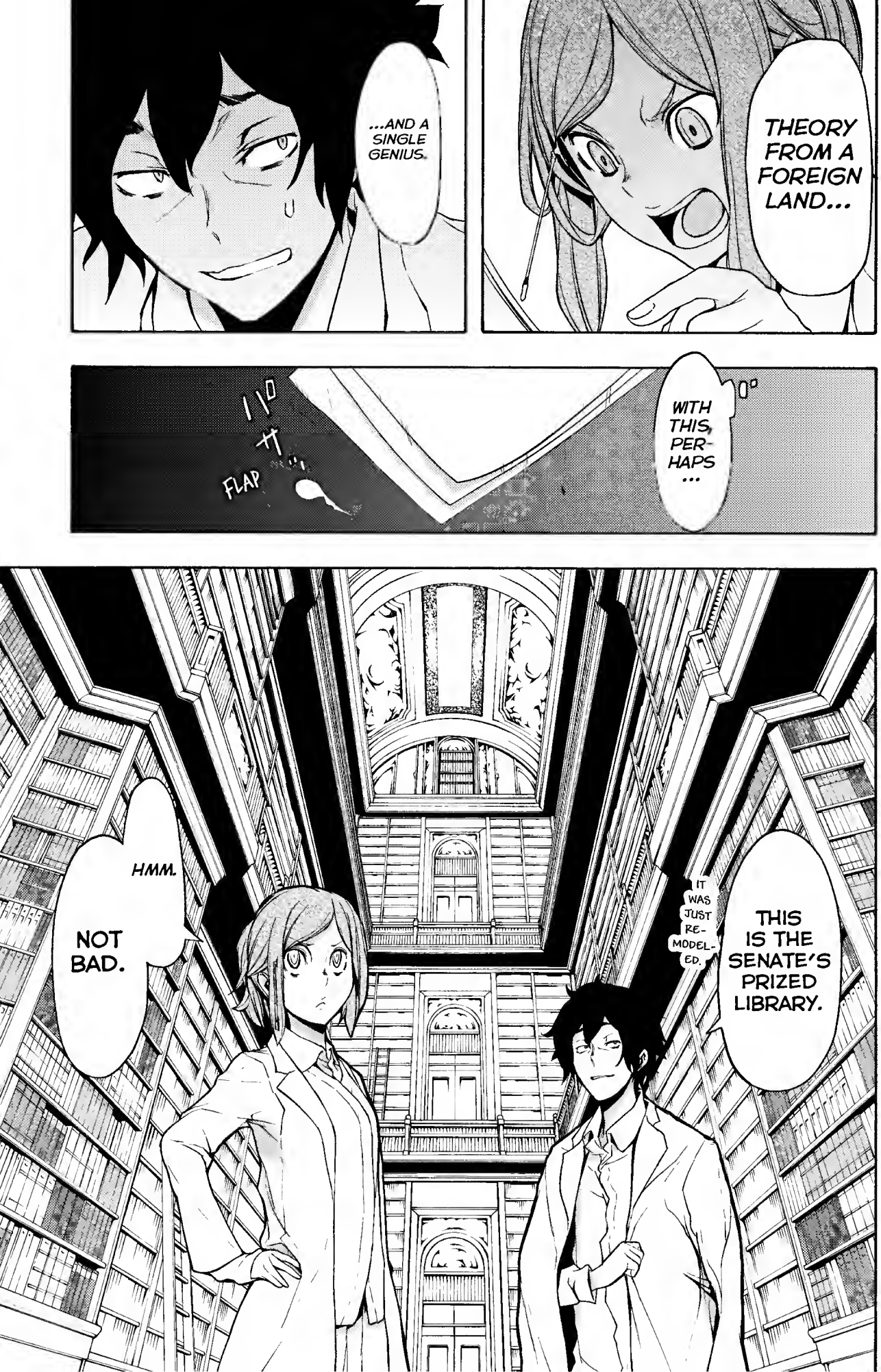

TH-THANK YOU. YOU'RE TOO KIND.

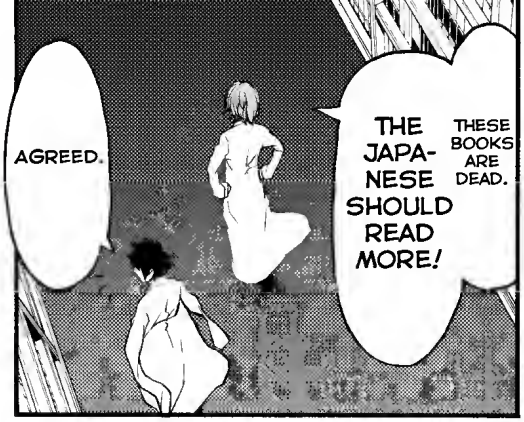
HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR YOUR FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREATION OF THE SENATE,
THEN I WOULD NOT BE HERE TODAY.

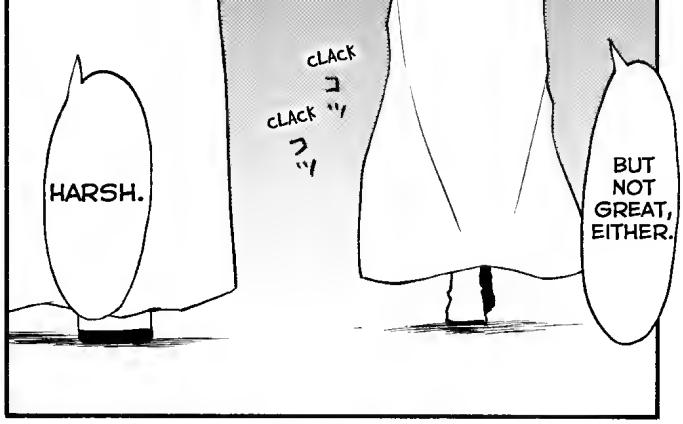

NO.
ALL THAT'S IN HERE IS MY TEA SET.
RATL


IS THAT WHAT'S IN THAT SUIT-CASE?
OF COURSE.
I'VE BROUGHT PLENTY OF MATERIAL WITH ME.
WHAT WE'RE COUNTING ON MOST NOW IS FOR WESTERN THEORY THAT CAN CONTRAST OURS.
I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR YOU.

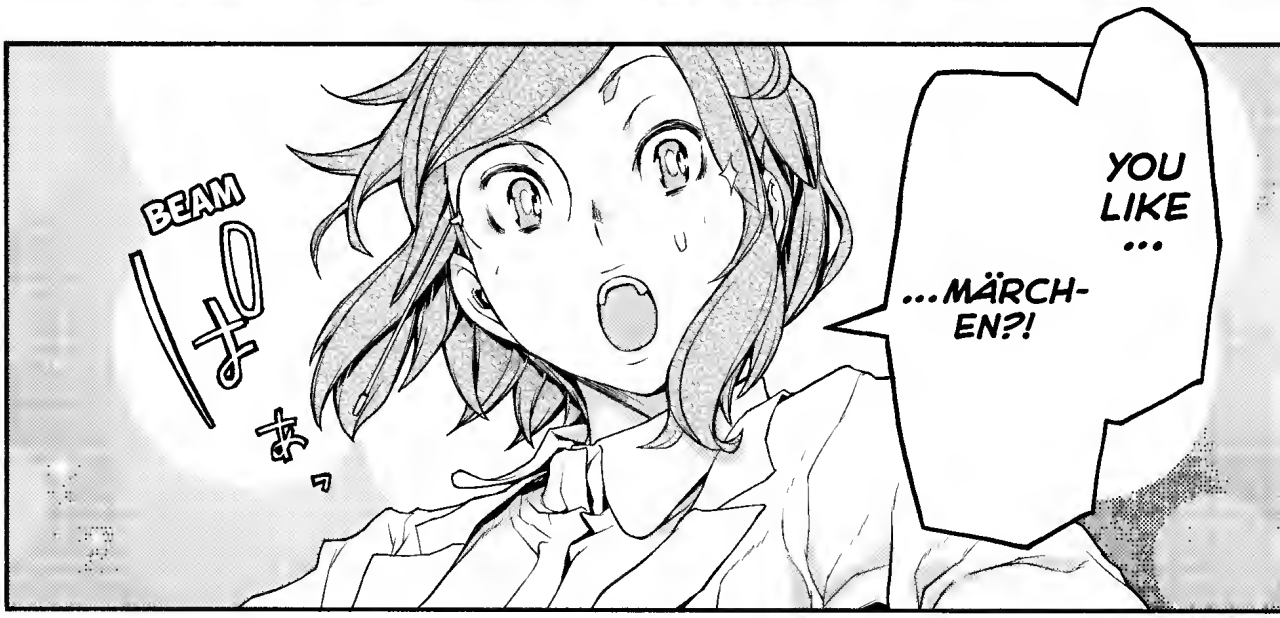
ALL OF THE DATA IS IN MY HEAD.
WE'RE SHORT ON TIME. LET'S GET TO WORK.
...
IN-CREDI-BLE.
TO THINK RESEARCH COULD AD-VANCE SO QUICKLY.
THIS DATA-BASE IS SO SLOPPY!
BONK

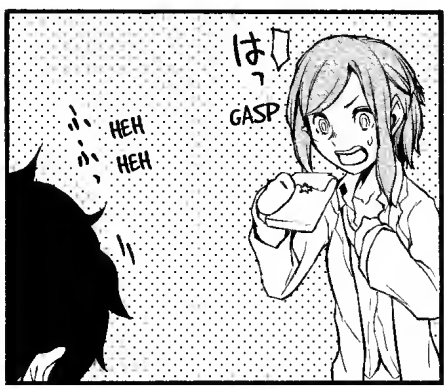

...AND A SINGLE GENIUS.
THEORY FROM A FOREIGN LAND...
FLAP
WITH THIS, PERHAPS...
THIS IS THE SENATE'S PRIZED LIBRARY.
IT WAS JUST RE-MODELED.
HMM.
NOT BAD.

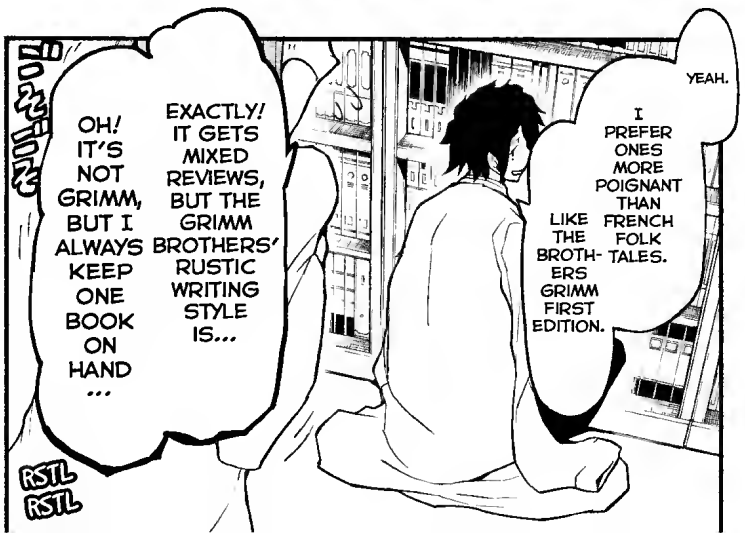

THESE BOOKS ARE DEAD.
THE JAPANESE SHOULD READ MORE!
AGREED.


CLACK
CLACK
HARSH.
BUT NOT GREAT, EITHER.

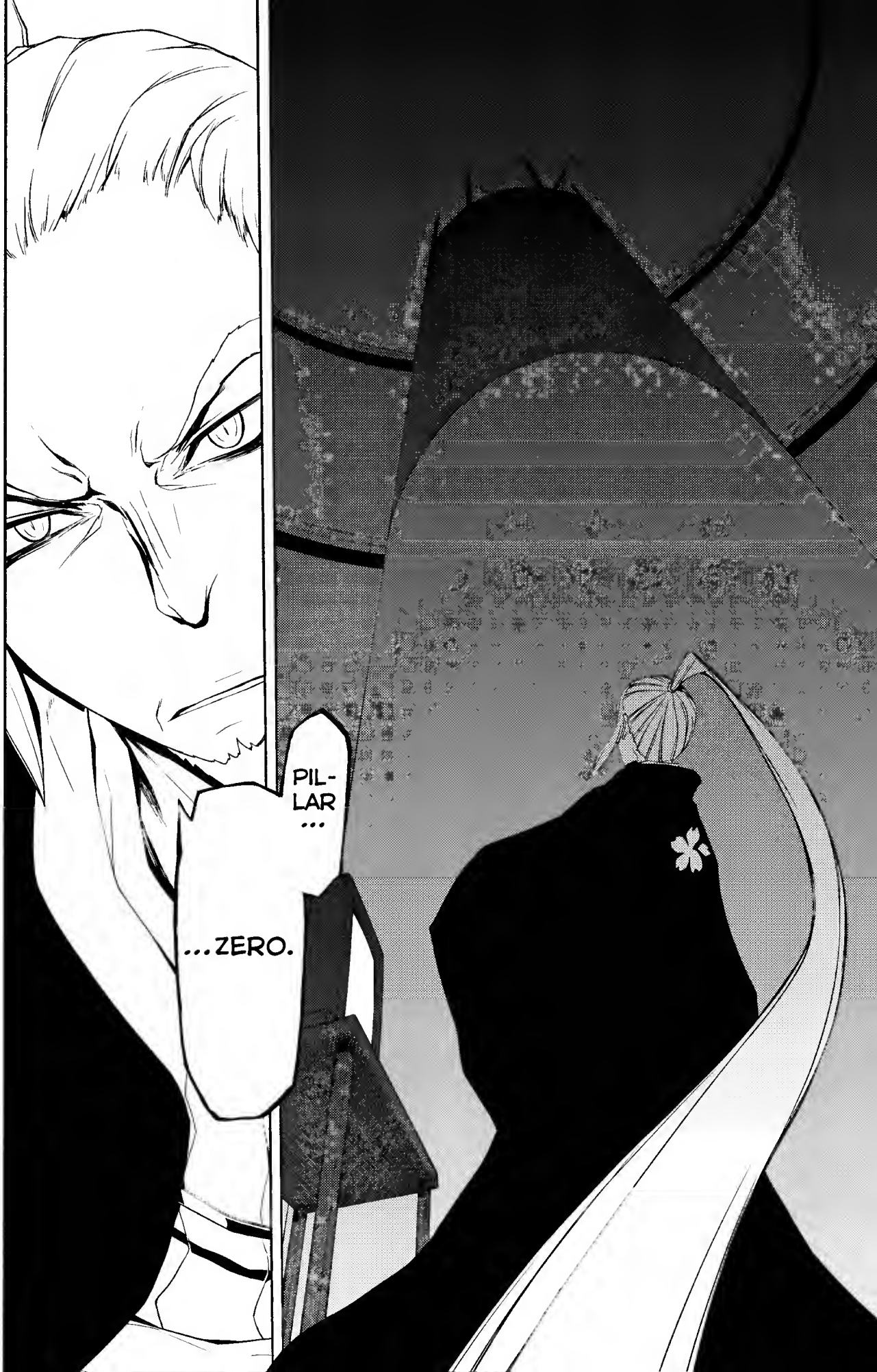
NOW THIS IS AN IMPRESSIVE SHELF.
IT'S FILLED WITH OLD GERMAN FAIRY TALES.
!
QUITE A COLLECTION THEY'VE GOT HERE.


BEAM
YOU LIKE...
...MÄRCHEN?!


GASP
HEH
HEH


YEAH.
I PREFER ONES MORE POIGNANT THAN FRENCH FOLK TALES.
LIKE THE BROTHERS GRIMM FIRST EDITION.
EXACTLY! IT GETS MIXED REVIEWS, BUT THE GRIMM BROTHERS' RUSTIC WRITING STYLE IS...
OH! IT'S NOT GRIMM, BUT I ALWAYS KEEP ONE BOOK ON HAND...
RSTL
RSTL

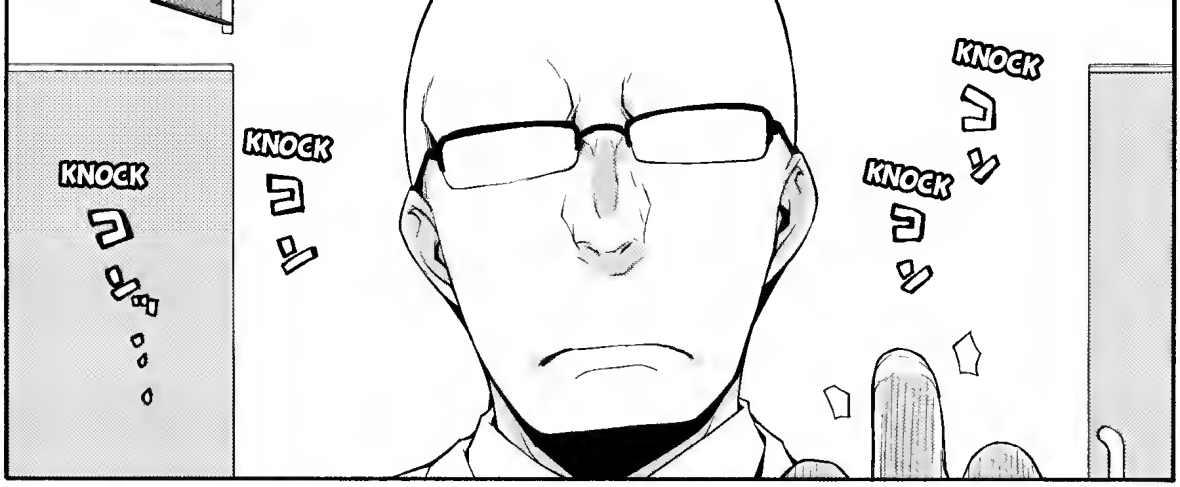
...BUT YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY MÄRCHENTIC.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN RESEARCH...
NOTHING.
...WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
OKAY, OKAY.
HERE, I RECOMMEND THIS MÄRCHEN COLLECTION! JUST GIVE IT BACK TO ME IF YOU'VE ALREADY READ IT!
MÄRCHEN IS GERMAN, AND "TIC" IS A SUFFIX FROM ENGLISH, SO MÄRCHENTIC IS A JAPANESE PORTMANTEAU! USE PROPER GRAMMAR!
...!
I DON'T LEND THESE TO JUST ANYONE, YOU KNOW...
MY LIFE'S WORK...
NO, WE'LL COMPLETE IT FOR SURE.
...THEN IT MAY NOT BE JUST A DREAM.
IF OUR RESEARCH CONTINUES AT THIS RATE...


PIL-
LAR
...
...ZERO.

THUD
PILLAR ZERO? WHAT MONSTROSITY HAVE YOU GONE AND MADE?!
IT'S TO SAVE THE WORLD. AND ...
I'M TRYING TO SAVE YOUR SON, MAKIHARU!
...TO PUT AN END ...
...TO YOUR RIDICULOUS STEPPING STONE RITUAL.

HUH?!
MY SONS, FOR ONE.
AND YOURS, MAKIHARU.
FWIP
YOU CAN GIVE IT A GRANDIOSE NAME LIKE PILLAR ZERO, BUT IT'S STILL JUST A HUMAN SACRIFICE, RIGHT?!
WHO WOULD CHOOSE TO GO INSIDE THAT?
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?! DOESN'T THAT DEFEAT THE POINT?
I'VE TOLD THEM THAT, OVER ...
...AND OVER AGAIN.
BUT THEY'RE TOO STUBBORN TO LISTEN.
THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL CAN'T STOP THE DIMENSIONS FROM FUSING.
IT'S MERELY PENANCE.
...
YOUR SON SAID THAT, RATHER THAN BE FORCED TO PARTAKE IN THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL,
HE WANTS TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE BY HIS OWN WILL.
AND MY SONS AGREED WITH HIM.
SURELY YOU REALIZE, MAKIHARU.

IN THAT CASE, WE SHOULD LEAVE THE GENERATION UP TO ITS MEMBERS.
...THE ERA OF OUR SONS' GENERATION IS ALREADY UPON US.
THE COMING, NO, I SUPPOSE ...
EVEN IF...
...AN ENTIRE GENER-ATION IS LOST.
WE HAVE THE THE-ORY, BUT THE OTHER TWO PARTS ...
THAT BEING SAID, PILLAR ZERO IS NOT COM-PLETE YET.


KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
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KNOCK
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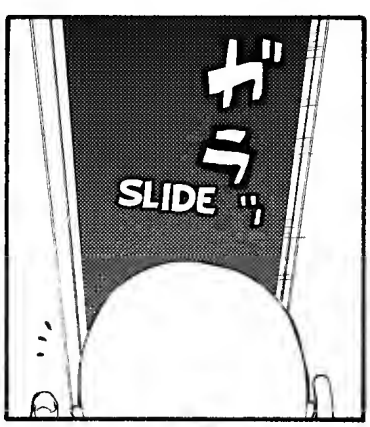
KNOCK
コン…。

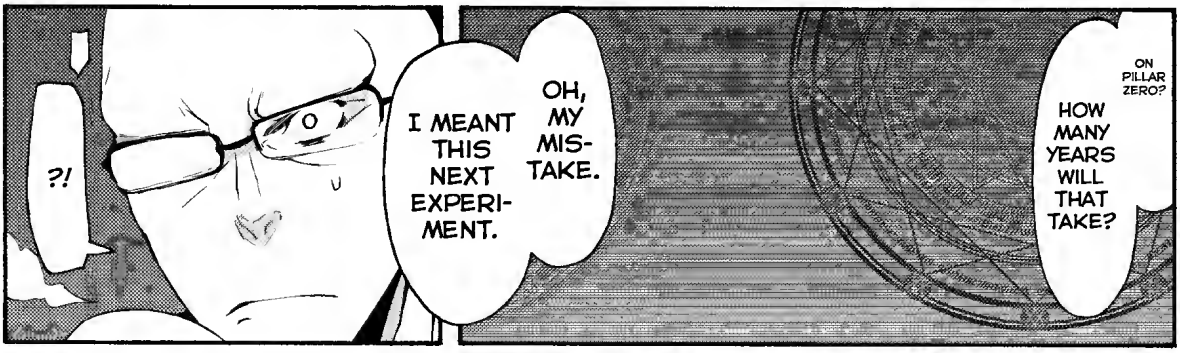

ガラ
SLIDE

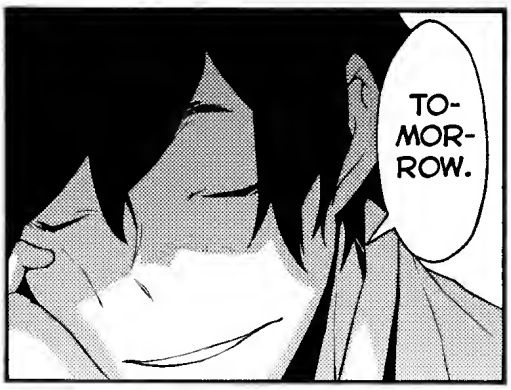
CLICK
カチ

PAR-
DON
ME.
HE'S
INSIDE.
THANKS
…

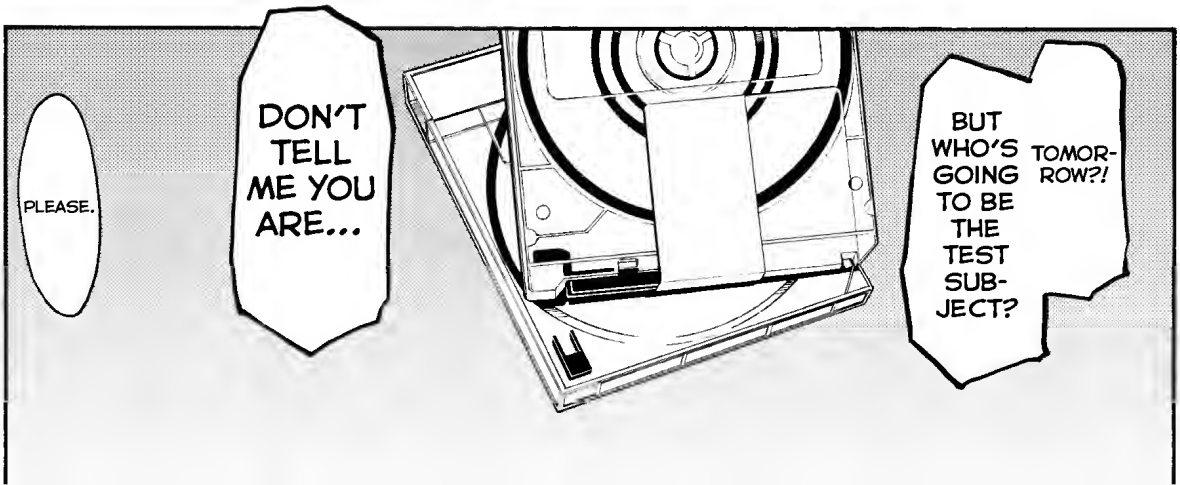
COME
ON IN,
UZU.

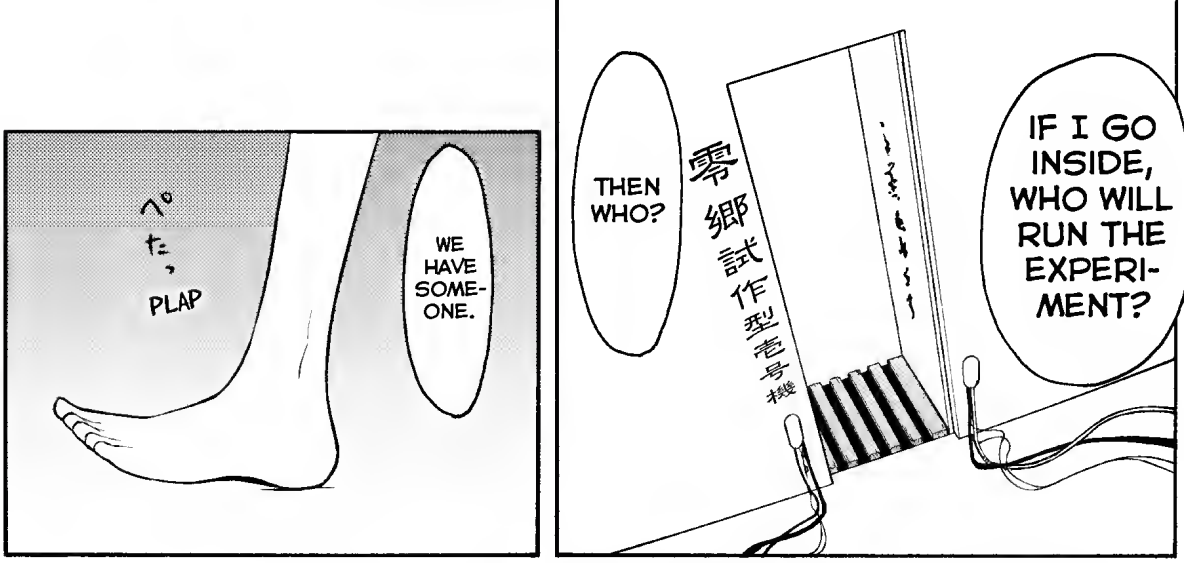
AREN'T YOU TWO GOING TO GET MARRIED?
HM?
MMM...
EVENTUALLY, I GUESS.
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT AFTER WE FINISH THIS RESEARCH.


ON PILLAR ZERO?
HOW MANY YEARS WILL THAT TAKE?
OH, MY MISTAKE.
I MEANT THIS NEXT EXPERIMENT.
?!

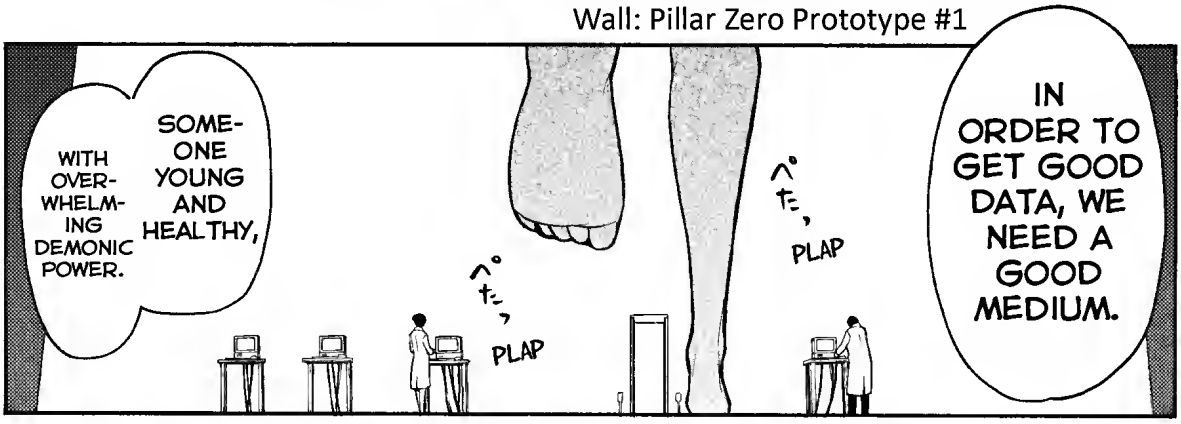

TOMORROW.

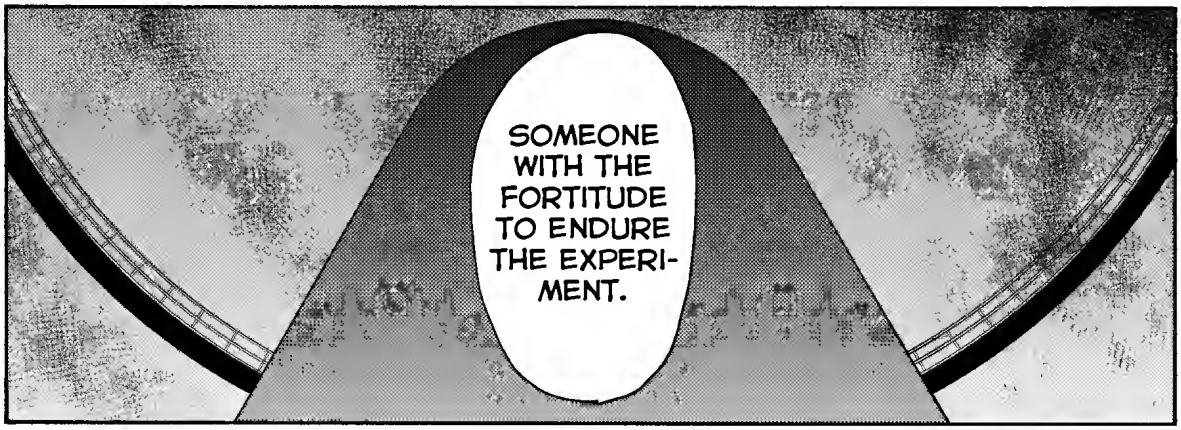
EXPERIMENT?! YOU'RE GOING TO DO A HUMAN TRIAL ON PILLAR ZERO?!
ISN'T THAT WHAT I JUST SAID?
WHEN?!


BUT WHO'S GOING TO BE THE TEST SUBJECT?
TOMORROW?!
DON'T TELL ME YOU ARE...
PLEASE.



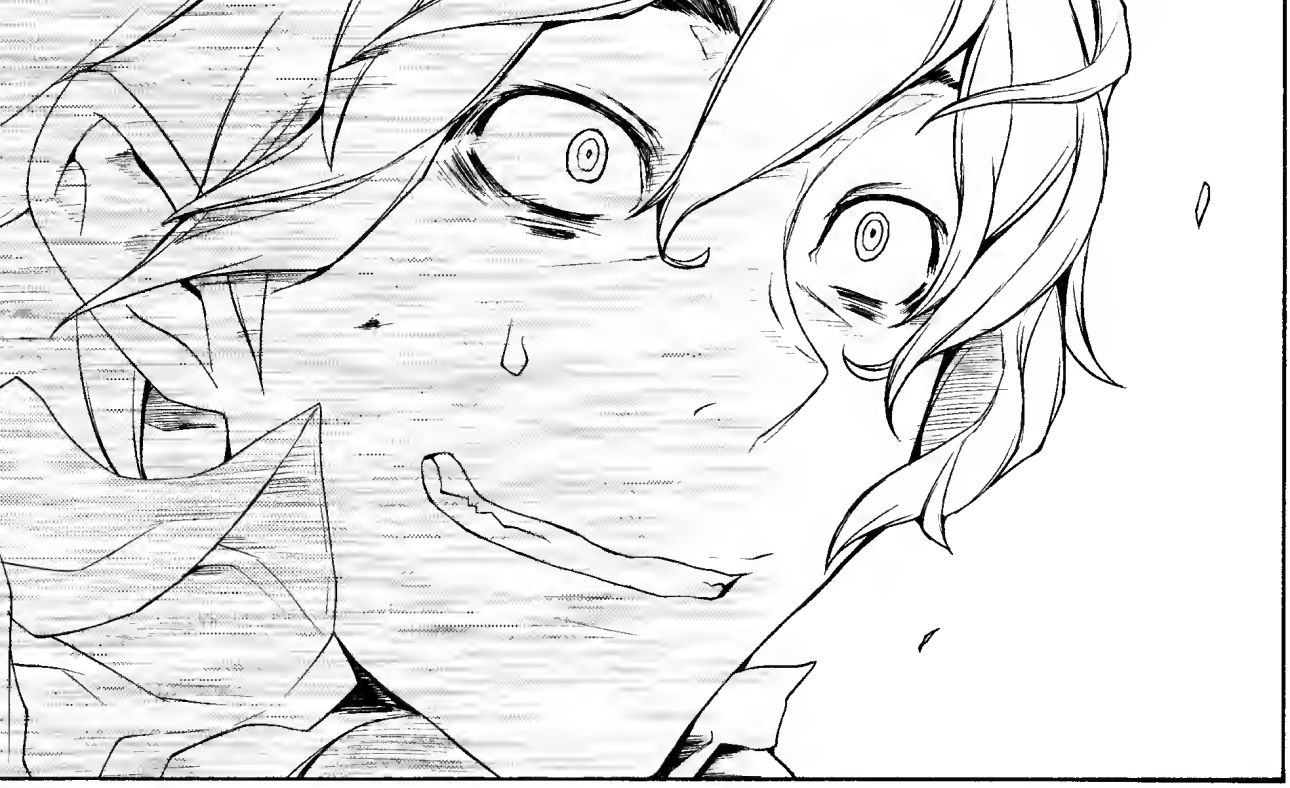
Wall: Pillar Zero Prototype #1

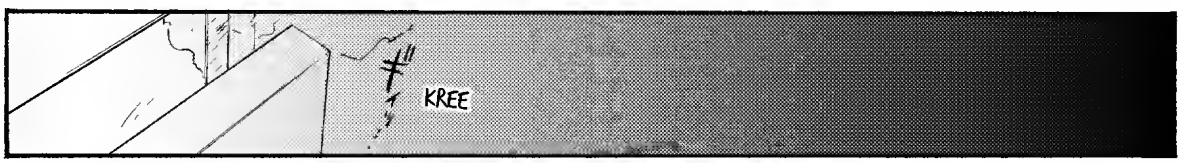




DON'T OPEN THE DOOR UNTIL YOU THINK IT'S OKAY.
...GOT IT.
ZERO
SHI-DARE.
ONE THING BEFORE WE START.

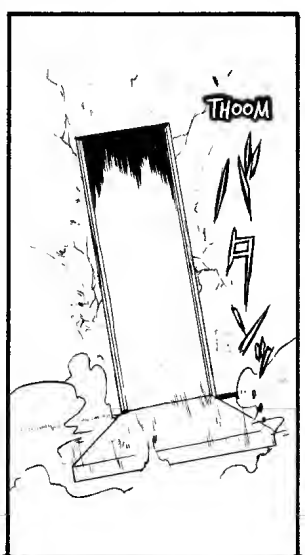
OPEN THE DOOR, NOW!
SHI-DARE!
THE EXPER-IMENT IS A FAIL-URE!
ZA
SHI-DARE!
ZA
EJECT
AS IF.
JUST LOOK AT ALL THIS DATA!
A FAIL-URE?
TAK カタ
TAK カタ
TAK カタ
OPEN THE DOOR!
OPEN IT!
THAT'S ENOUGH, SHIDARE!




KREE

PLAP
PLAP

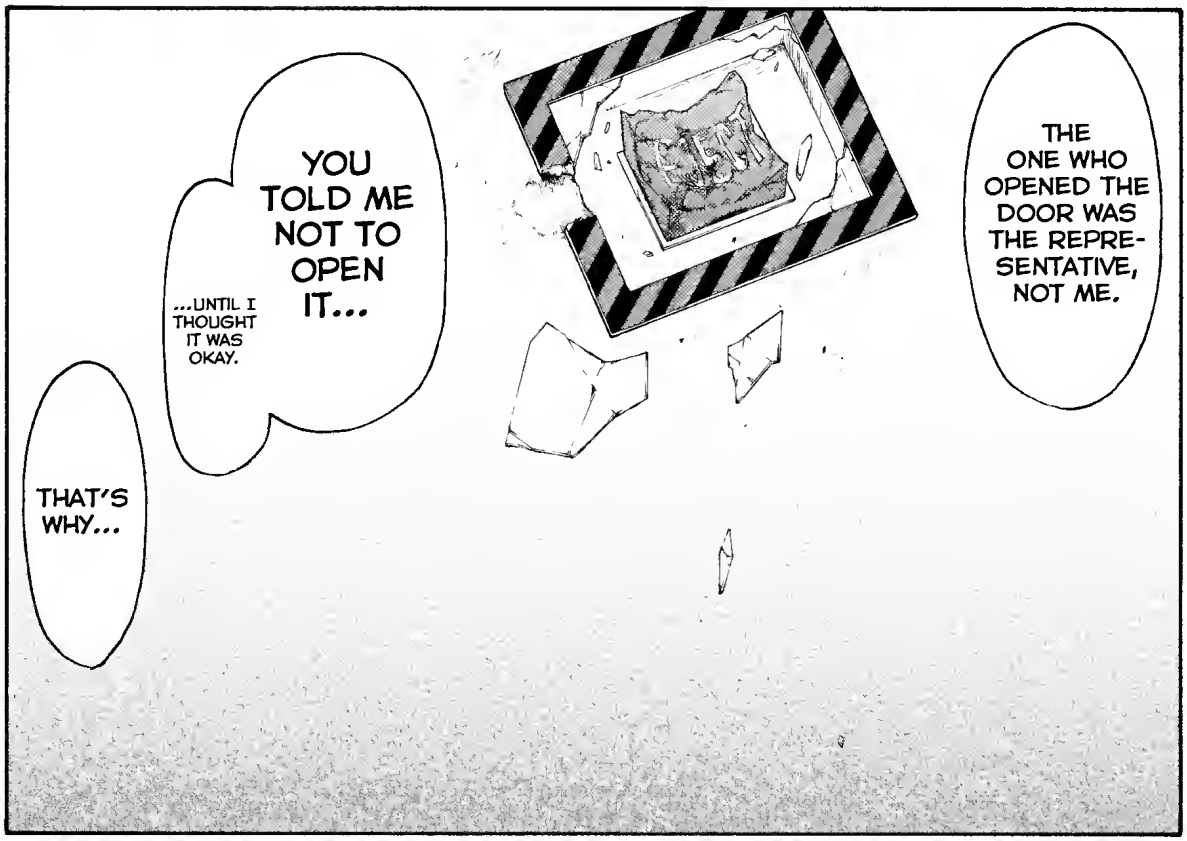
PLAP

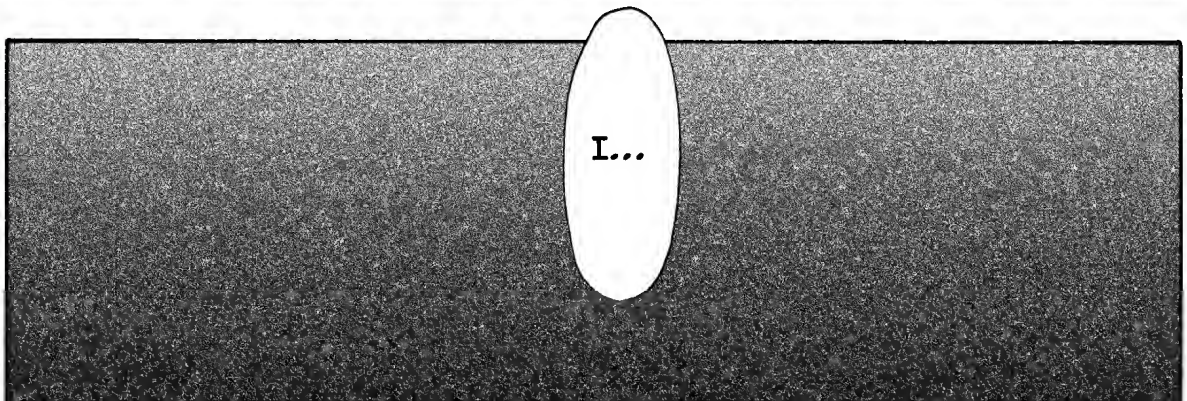

THOOM

OH, GOD ...
WELL ...
HAVEN'T YOU BECOME QUITE THE STUD.

QUI-
ET.
SHI-
DARE!
YOU...

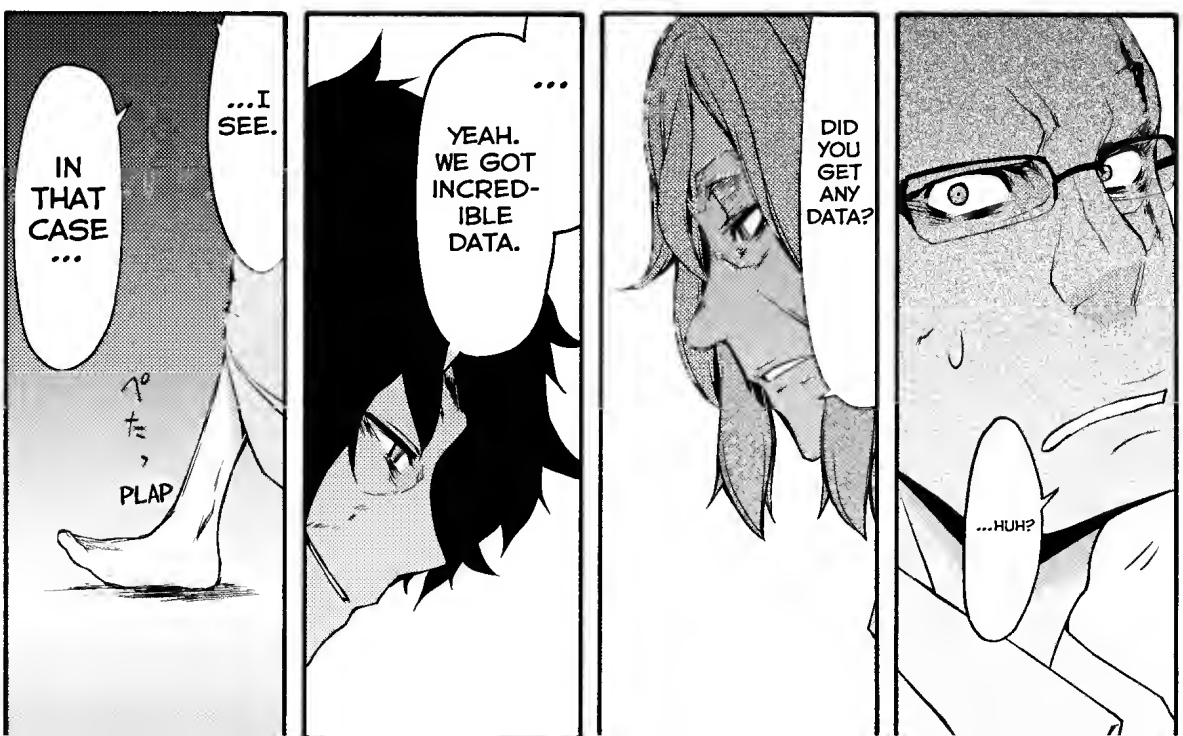
LUCY
...


THE
ONE WHO
OPENED THE
DOOR WAS
THE REPRE-
SENTATIVE,
NOT ME.
YOU
TOLD ME
NOT TO
OPEN
IT...
...UNTIL I
THOUGHT
IT WAS
OKAY.
THAT'S
WHY...


I...

I HAD ...
...NO INTENTION OF OPENING IT UNTIL THE VERY END.

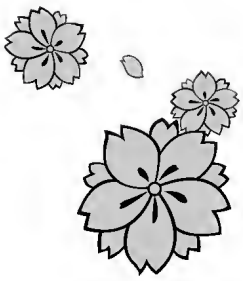
SHI-DARE! WHAT HAVE YOU ...?
SHI-DARE!
AND THE DATA?


...HUH?
DID YOU GET ANY DATA?
...
YEAH. WE GOT INCRED-IBLE DATA.
...I SEE.
IN THAT CASE ...
PLAP

...THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.

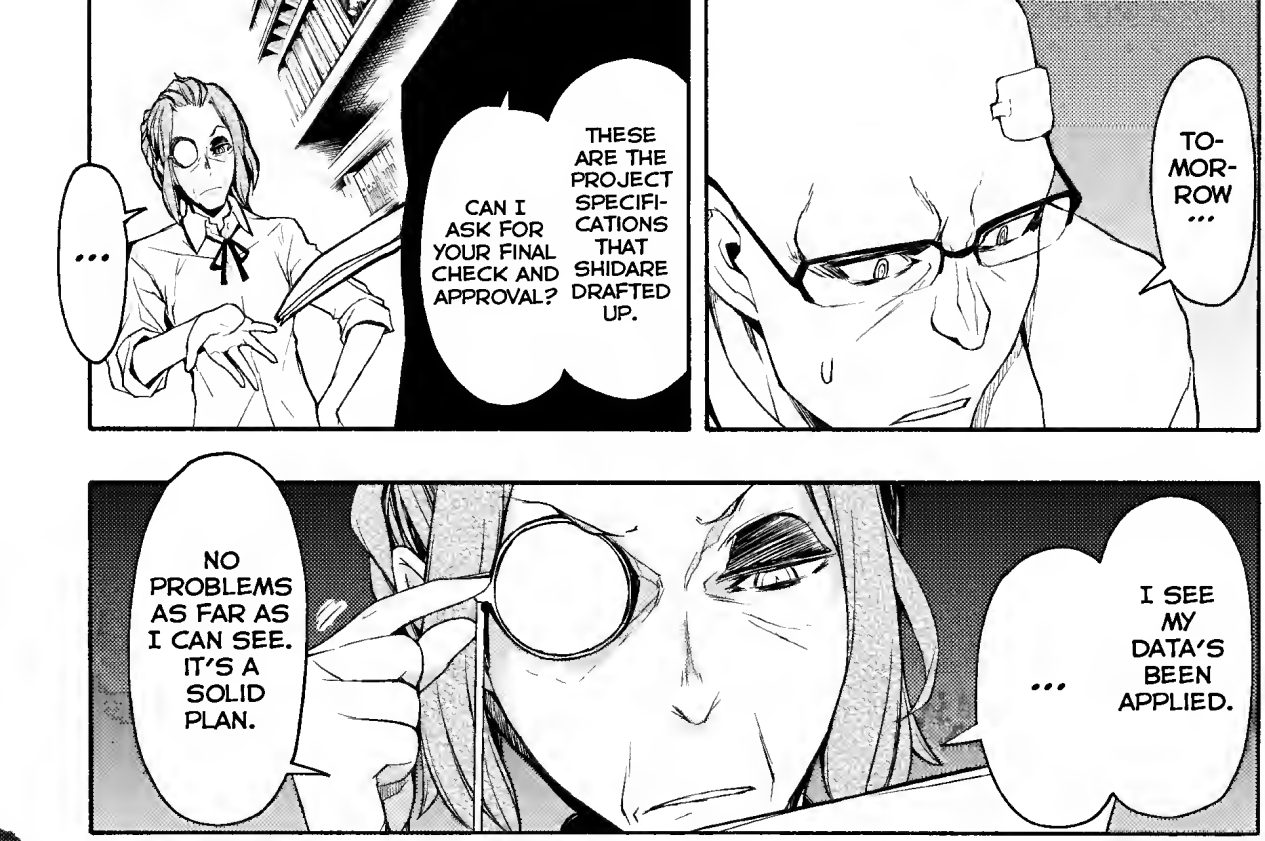
94TH NIGHT PAST AND PRESENT (PART TWO) END

YOZAKURA
QUARTET
17

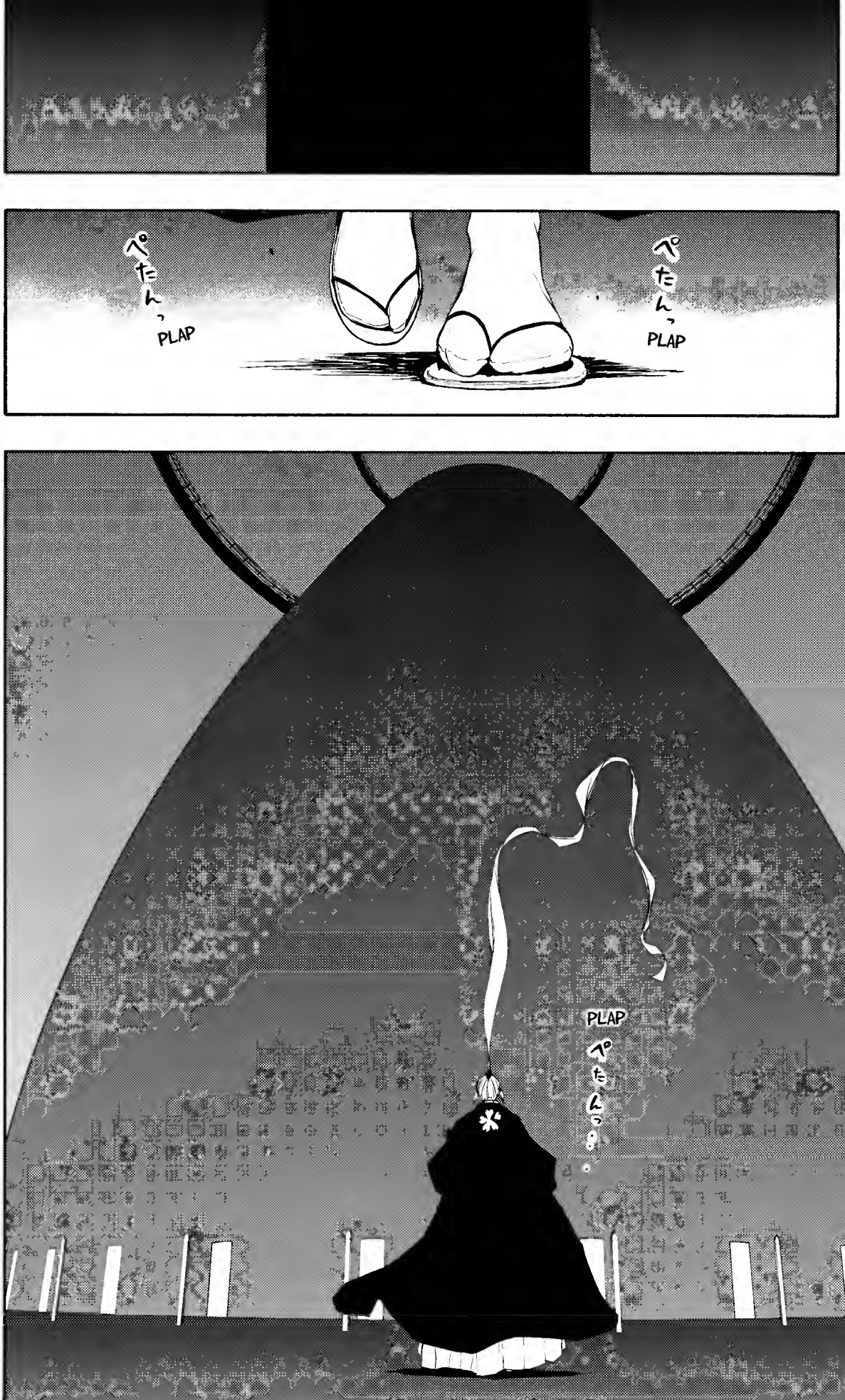


CLUNK
YES, THIS WILL DO.
WELL DONE.
...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT TURNED OUT LIKE THIS...
HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO MOPE AROUND?
...
I'LL TAKE MY TIME MOVING THINGS AROUND.
THE LIBRARY'S NOT BAD, BUT THE ORGANIZATION IS A MESS.
SHIDARE SAID ...
I WANT TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY DAYS SURROUNDED BY BOOKS.
I'M TIRED OF RESEARCH.

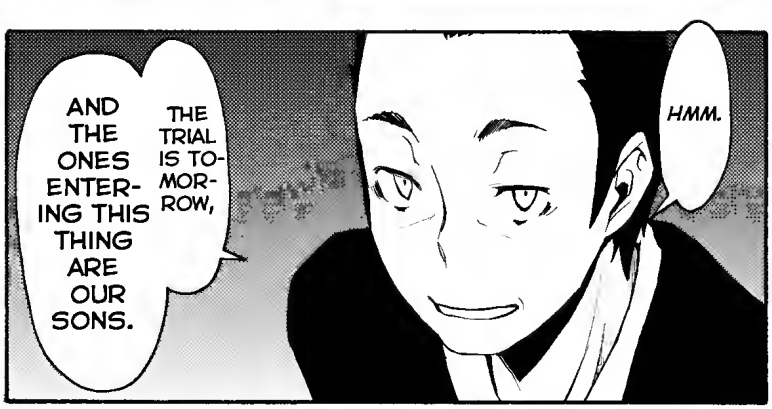
...
HE WAS GOING TO...
HE WAS ...
...ONCE THE EXPERIMENT WAS FINISHED,
...HM.
THAT'S A GOOD EXPRESSION YOU'RE WEARING.
EXCUSE ME.
CLACK
I SEE YOU'VE FOUND YOUR RESOLVE.
PILLAR ZERO ...
...IS SCHEDULED TO BE ACTIVATED TOMORROW.



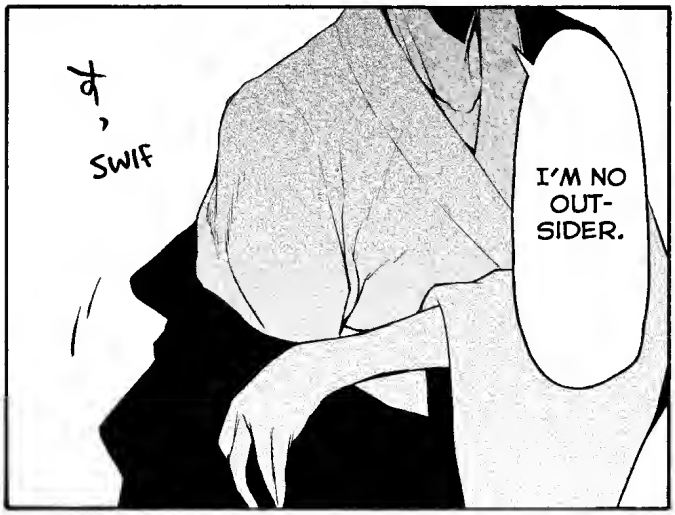
#95 PAST AND PRESENT (EPILOGUE)


ペたん
PLAP
ペたん
PLAP
PLAP
ペたん

...
ONLY AUTHOR-IZED PERSON-NEL ARE ALLOWED IN HERE ...


HMM.
THE TRIAL IS TO-MOR-ROW,
AND THE ONES ENTER-ING THIS THING ARE OUR SONS.

...MAKI-HARU.
カラン
CLACK


I'M NO OUT-SIDER.
すっ
SWIF

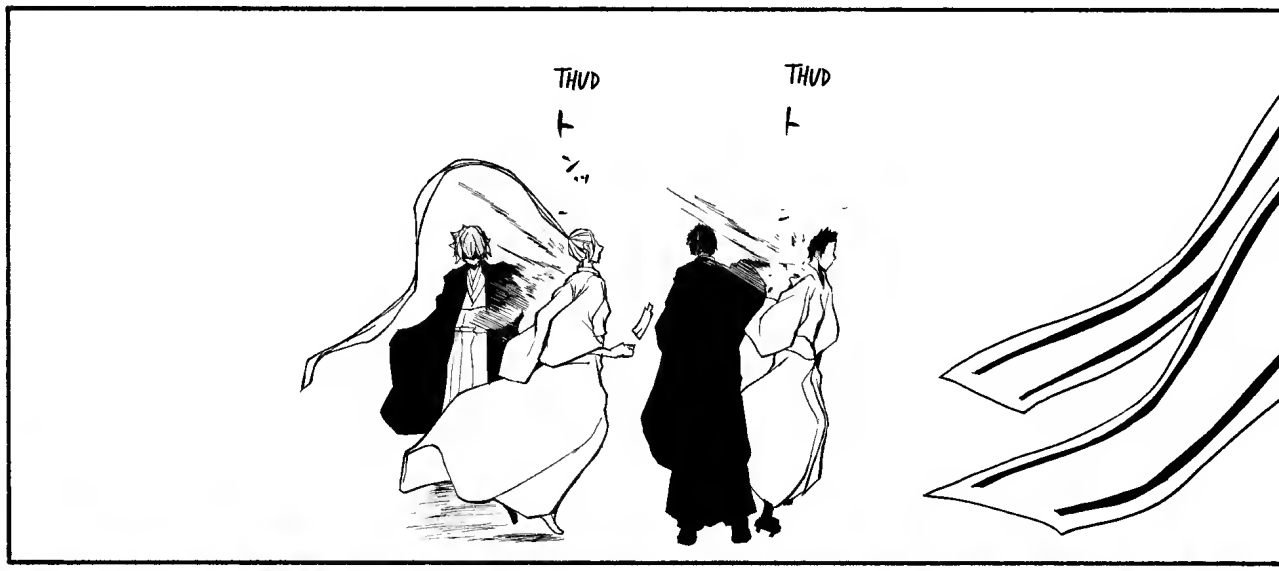
I'D SAY THAT MAKES YOU AN OUTSIDER, TOO.
...

I KNOW.
NEI-THER AM I.
はさっ
FLAP

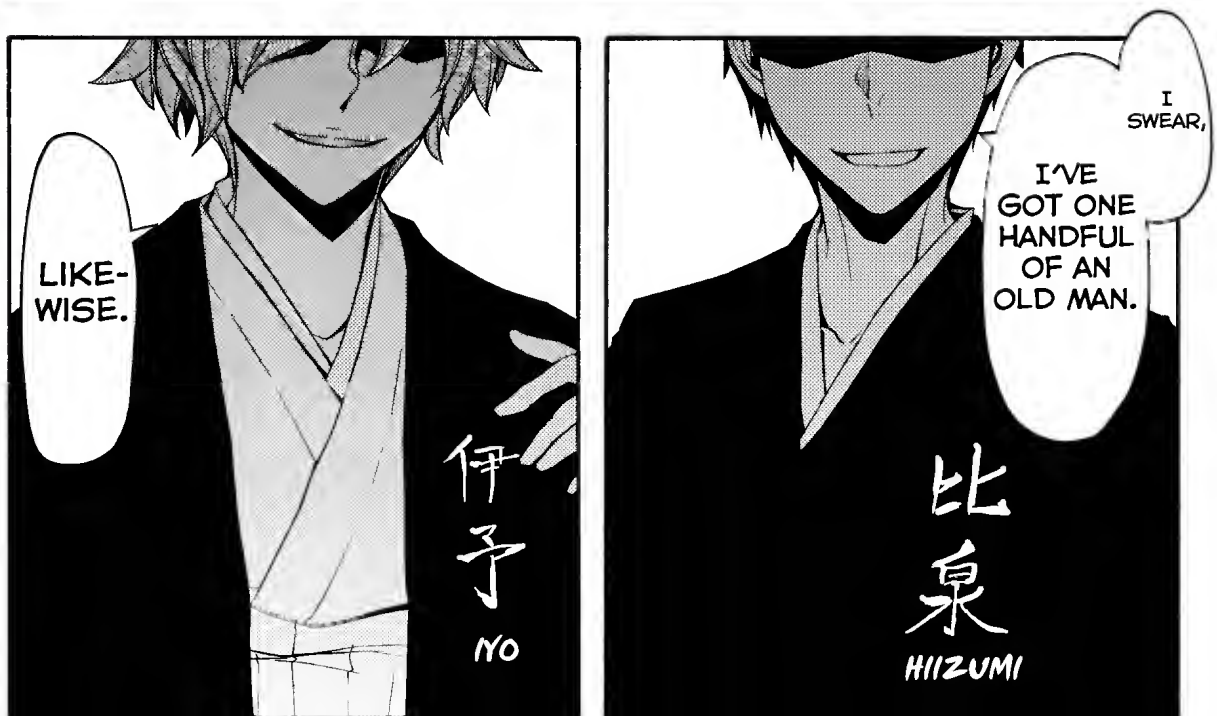
SKF
THEY'RE GONNA BE MIGHTY ANGRY.
SKF
LET THEM BE ANGRY.
SKF
SKFF
WE'RE INVOLV-ING OUR-SELVES.

CLACK
THEY STILL HAVE A FUTURE.
THERE IS NO ONE MORE SUITED FOR THIS DUTY THAN US.
CLACK
AGREED.
FLIP
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?
BUT CAN YOU REALLY OPERATE THIS THING?
MONKEY
GWOOM
MRUP MRUP MRUP

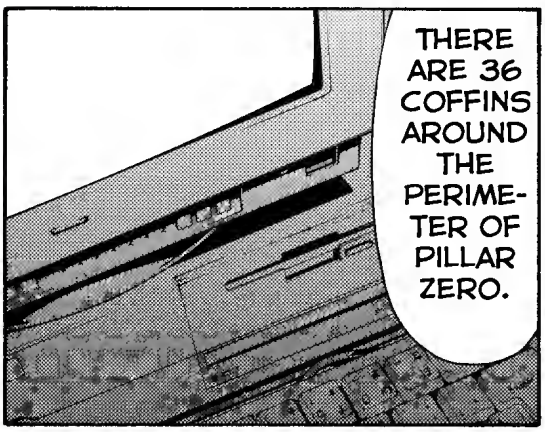
SNAP
FWOO
THIS SHIKI-GAMI ...!
FWIP
!

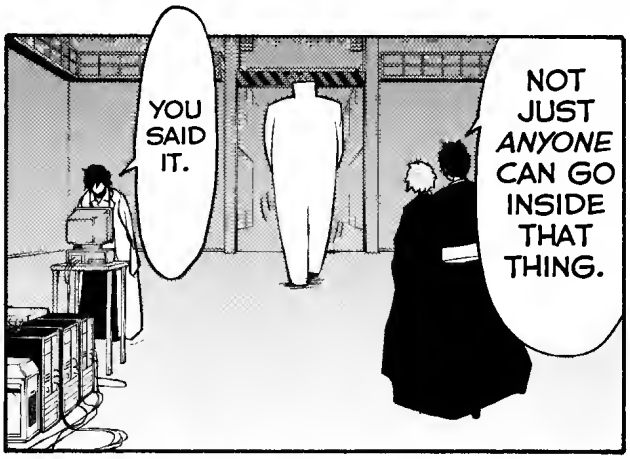

THUD
THUD

PHEW ...
FWUMP
FWUMP


I SWEAR, I'VE GOT ONE HANDFUL OF AN OLD MAN.
HIIZUMI
LIKE-WISE.
IYO

SORRY, SHIDARE, BUT COULD YOU MAKE SURE THESE TWO DON'T WAKE UP UNTIL TOMORROW?
ROGER.

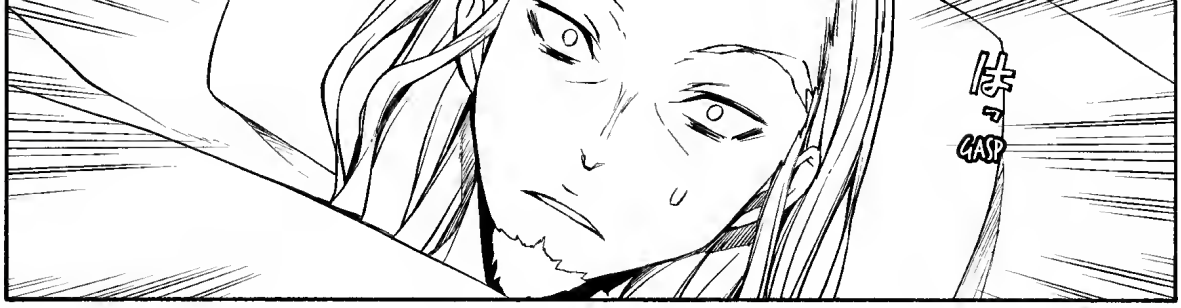

THERE ARE 36 COFFINS AROUND THE PERIME-TER OF PILLAR ZERO.

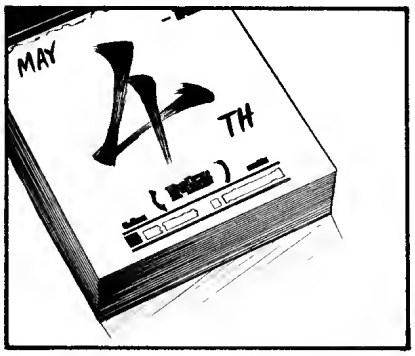

YOU SAID IT.
NOT JUST *ANYONE* CAN GO INSIDE THAT THING.

36
零
PILLAR ZERO
EVERY PERSON WHO ENTERS THE PILLAR MUST HAVE THEIR LIFE FORCE CAREFULLY ANA-LYZED AND PLACED ACCORDINGLY SO AS TO MAINTAIN THE EQUILIBRIUM OF POWER.
IF THAT BALANCE IS DISRUPTED, PILLAR ZERO WILL GO BERSERK.
COFFIN No. 1-36

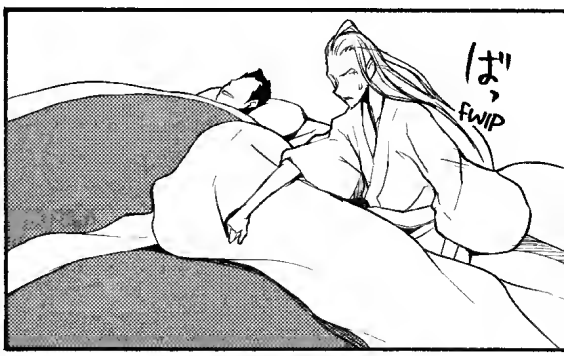
THEY'VE SEEN THE OUTLINE. THEY KNOW THEY AREN'T A MATCH.
THEY PROBABLY JUST DON'T WANT TO ACCEPT IT.
THEN, WHILE ADJUSTING FOR BALANCE, THE OTHERS WILL BE PLACED INSIDE OVER THE COURSE OF THREE YEARS.
比泉
HIIZUMI
FIRST IN WILL BE ME AND MY WIFE.
I KNOW.
MAKE SURE TO HAVE A KID BEFORE THEN.
YOU'RE THE SEVENTH TO GO IN. IF ALL GOES AS PLANNED, THAT'S SIX MONTHS FROM NOW.
OF COURSE. HE'S MY SON, AFTER ALL.
HIIZUMI
比泉
CONGRATS.
HE'S GONNA MAKE A FINE MAN.
YOUR BOY, AKINA. HE'LL BE ONE TOMORROW, RIGHT?
IYO
伊予
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?
OH, YEAH. I HEARD ABOUT LUCY.

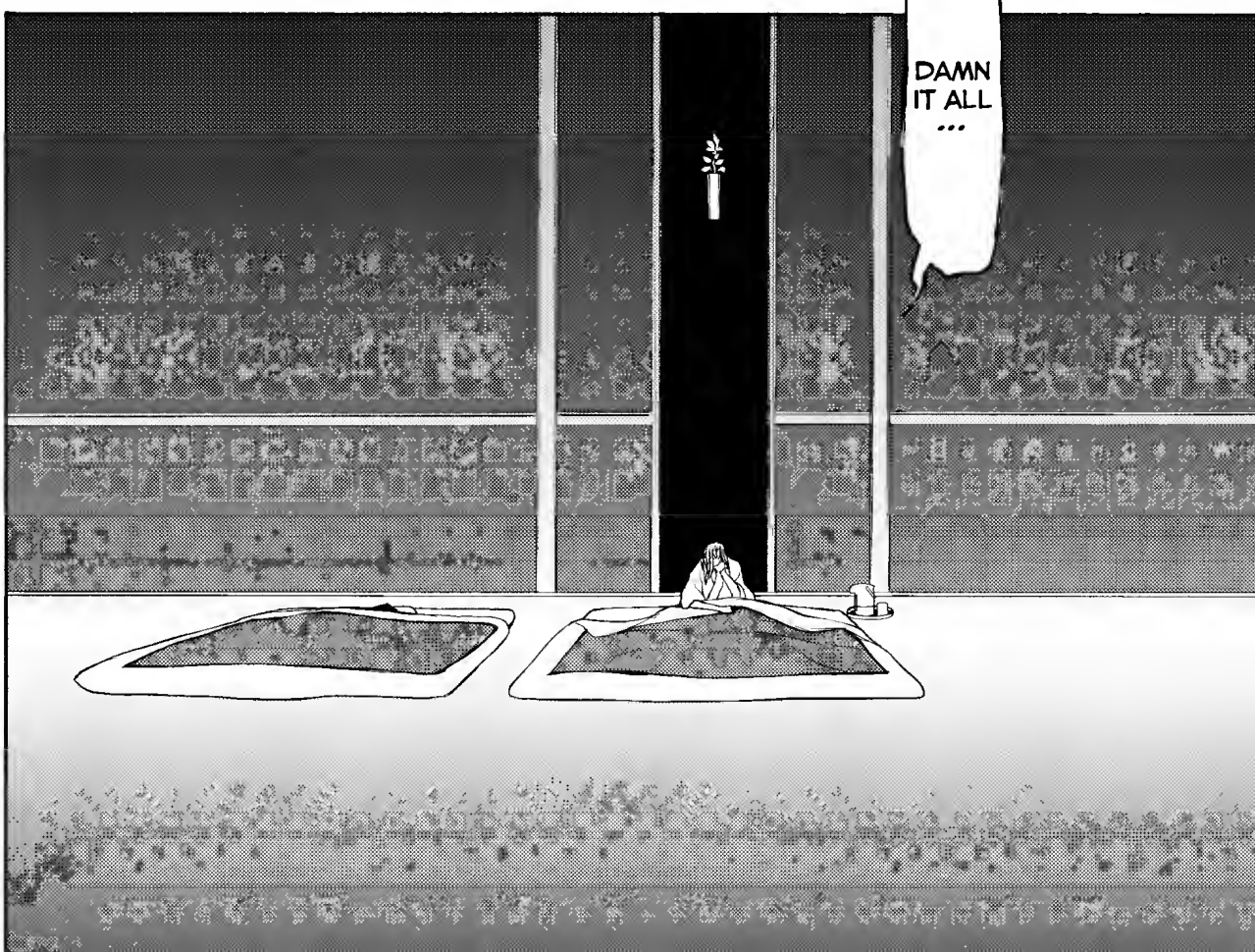
比泉
HIIZUMI
TAK
カラ
TAK
カラ
I'LL TELL YOU ...
...WHEN YOU GUYS COME OUT AGAIN.
DEAL.

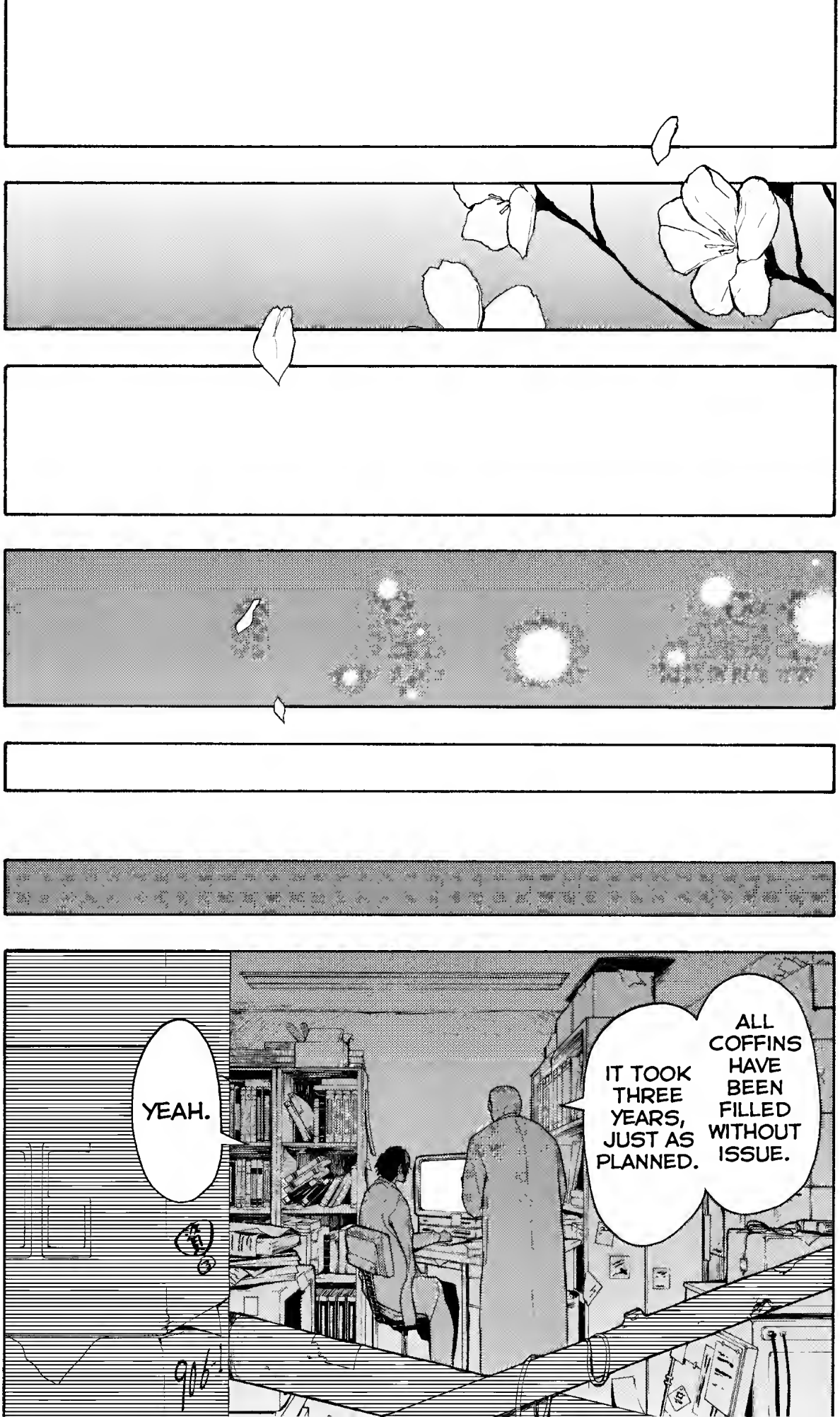

はっ
GASP


MAY
4TH

ぐー
SNORE


ばっ
FLIP


DAMN IT ALL ...

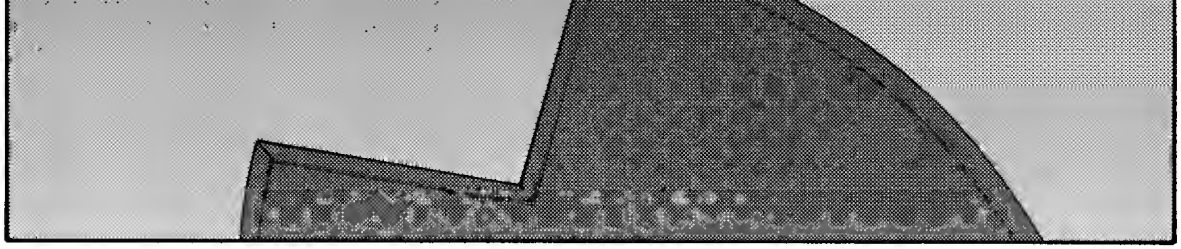

ALL COFFINS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITHOUT ISSUE.
IT TOOK THREE YEARS, JUST AS PLANNED.
YEAH.

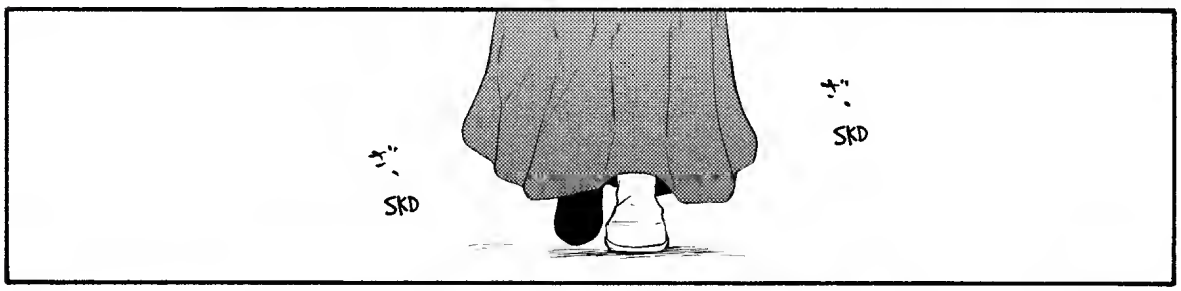
HOW-EVER ...
...OUR DUTY ISN'T OVER YET.

WITH THIS, THE PROGRES-SION OF DIMEN-SIONAL FUSION AND PILLAR ZERO'S DETER-RENCE ARE IN EQUILIBRIUM.
YES.
THIS OUGHT TO BUY US TIME.

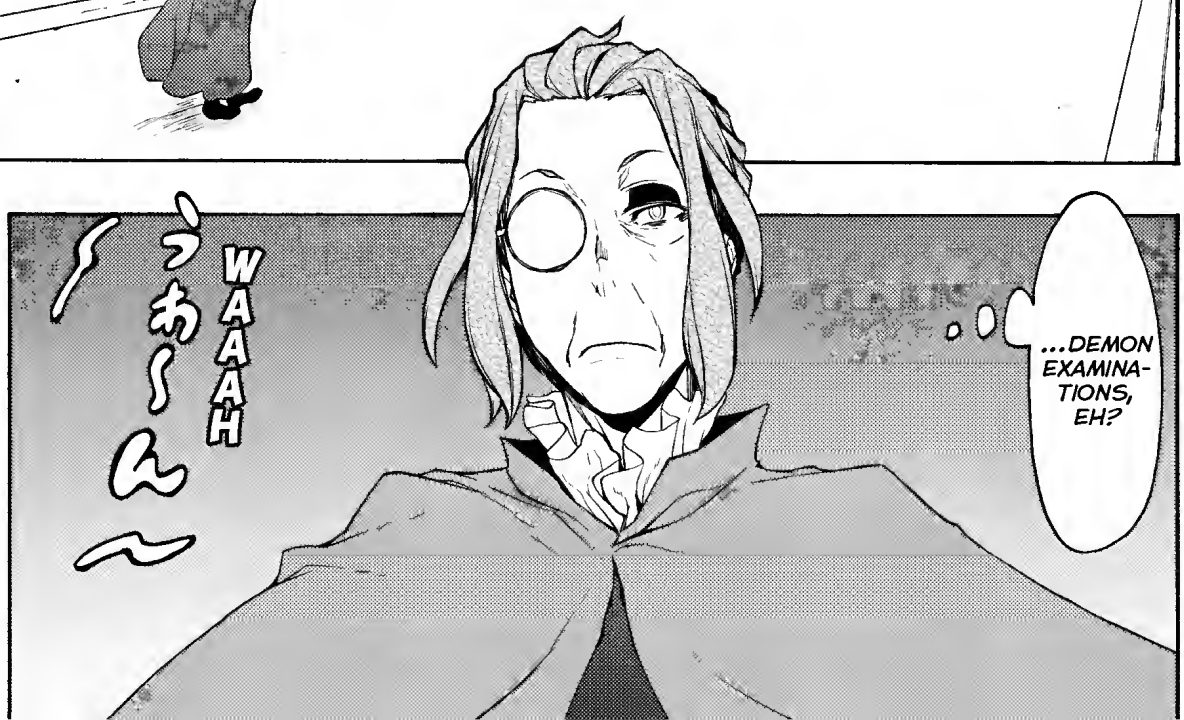
SIR!
HOW'S IT GO-ING?
...

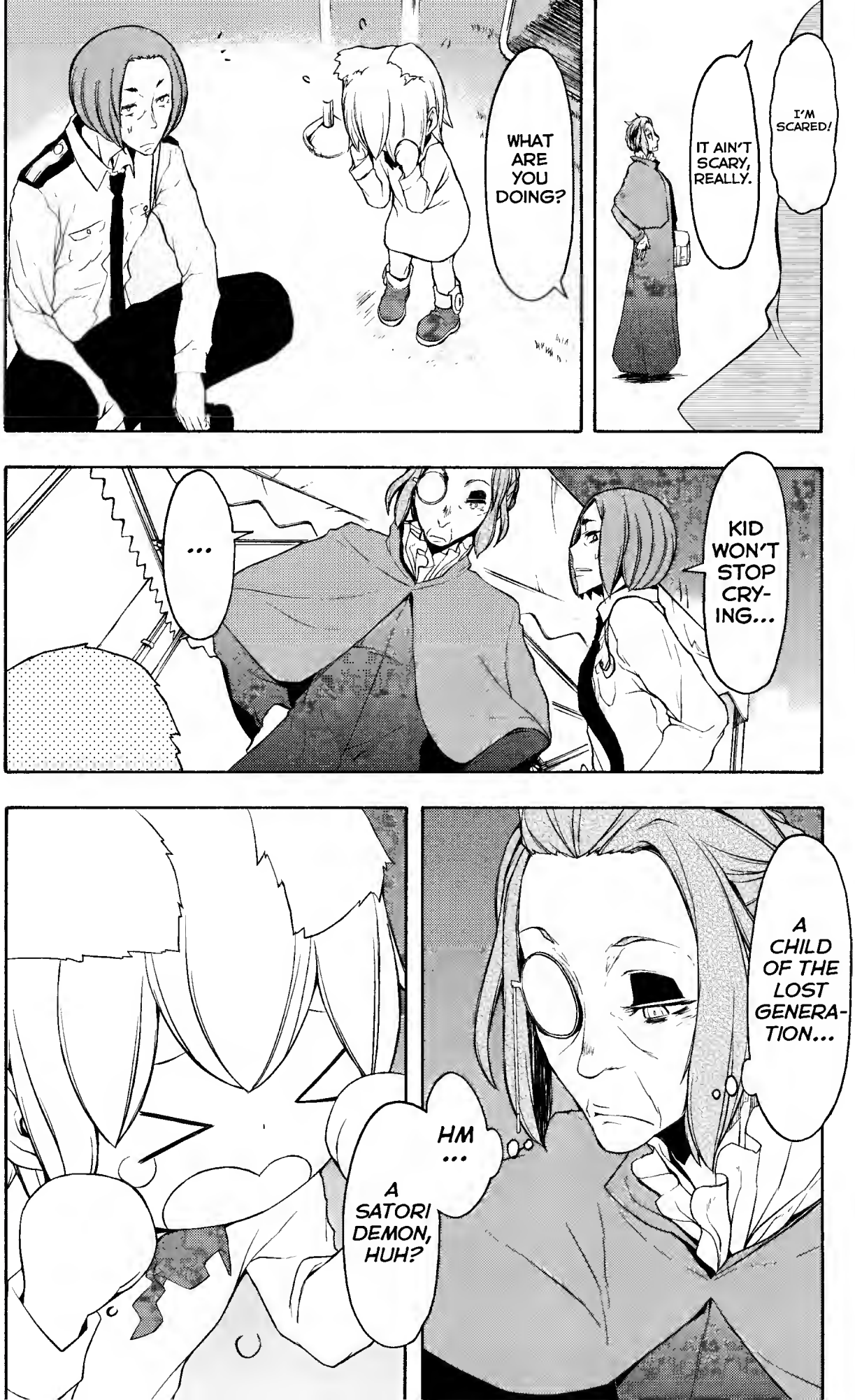
STAGE ONE, THE LOADING OF 34 SUB-JECTS ...
...HAS JUST BEEN COMPLET-ED.

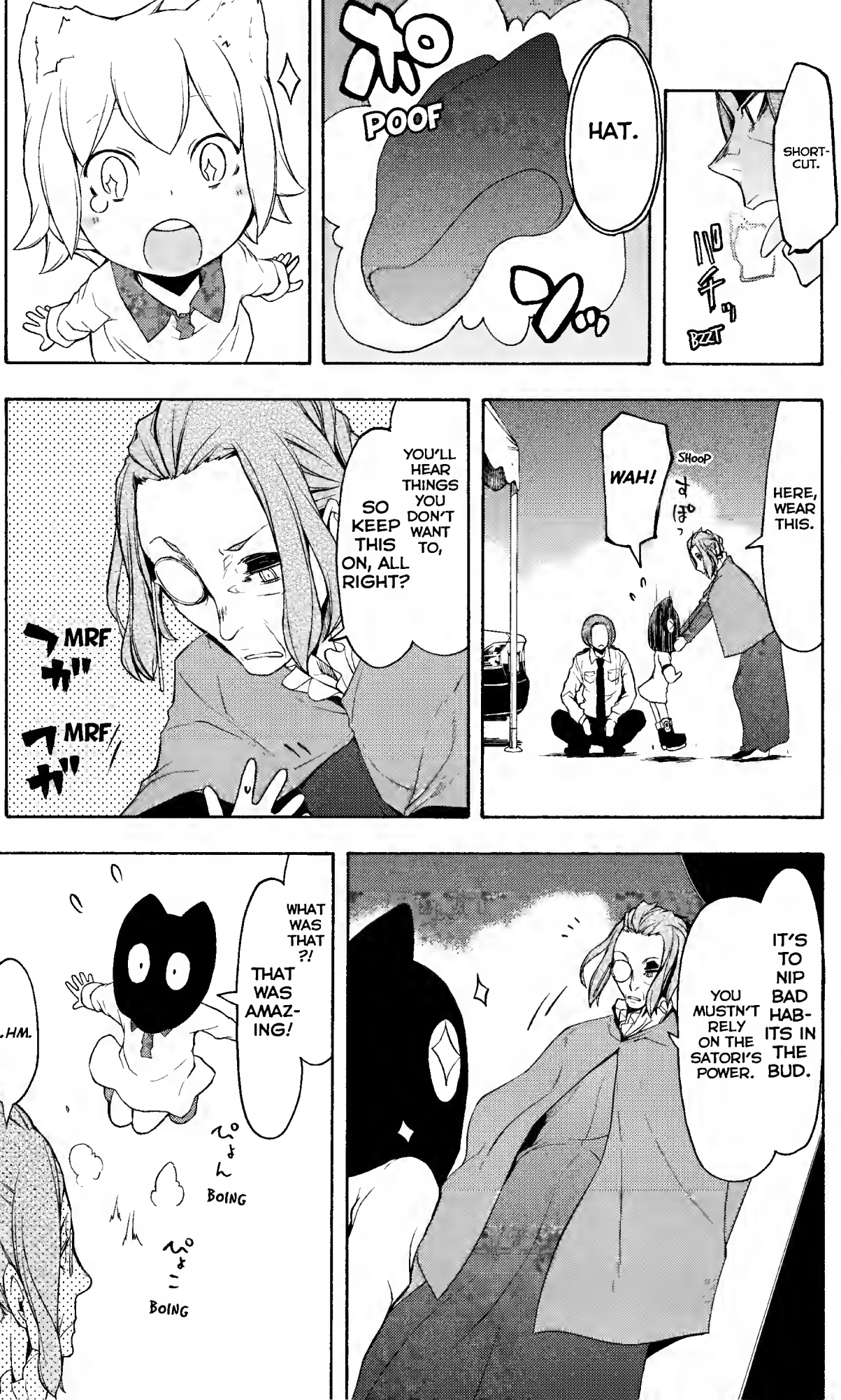


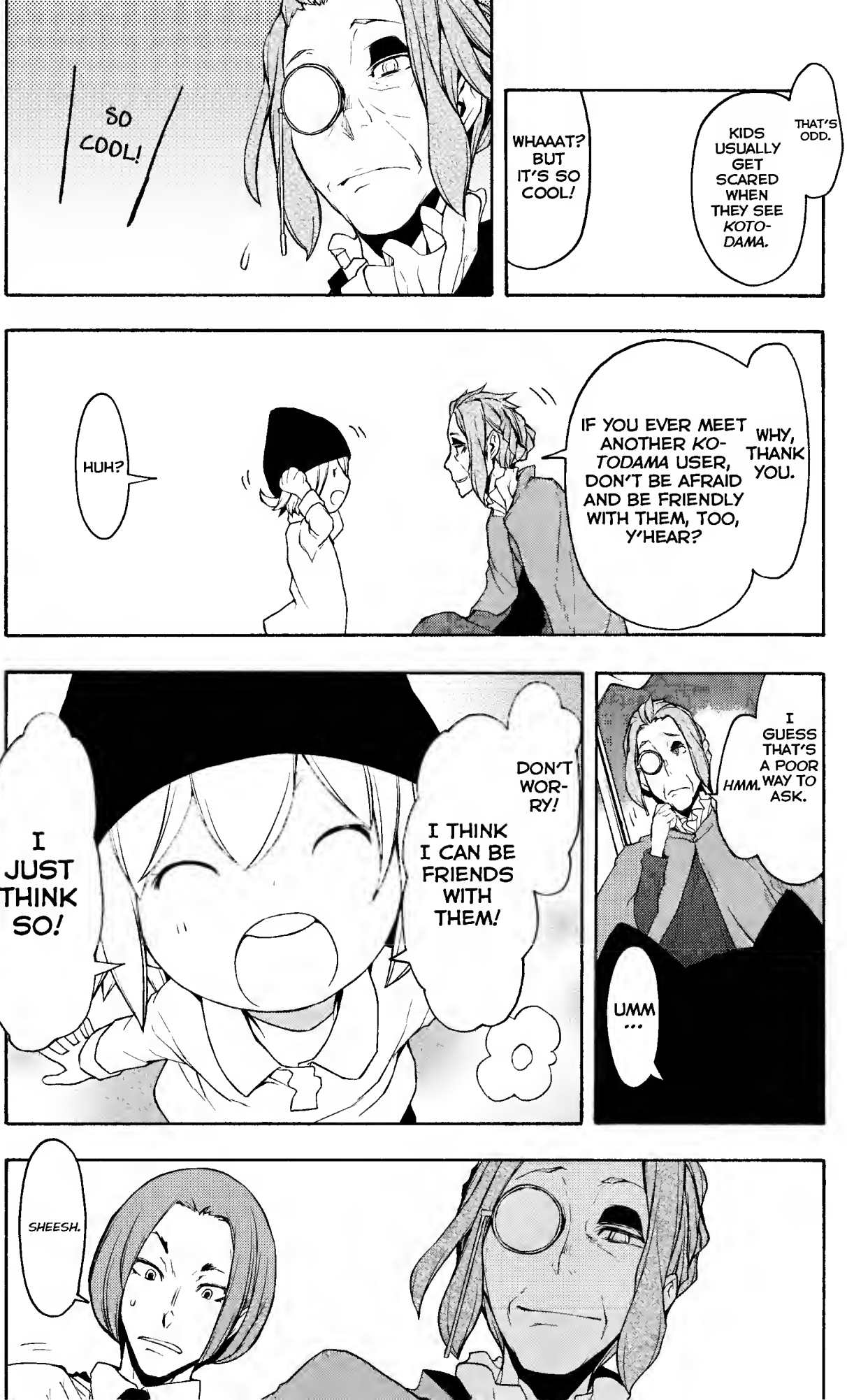

SKD
SKD

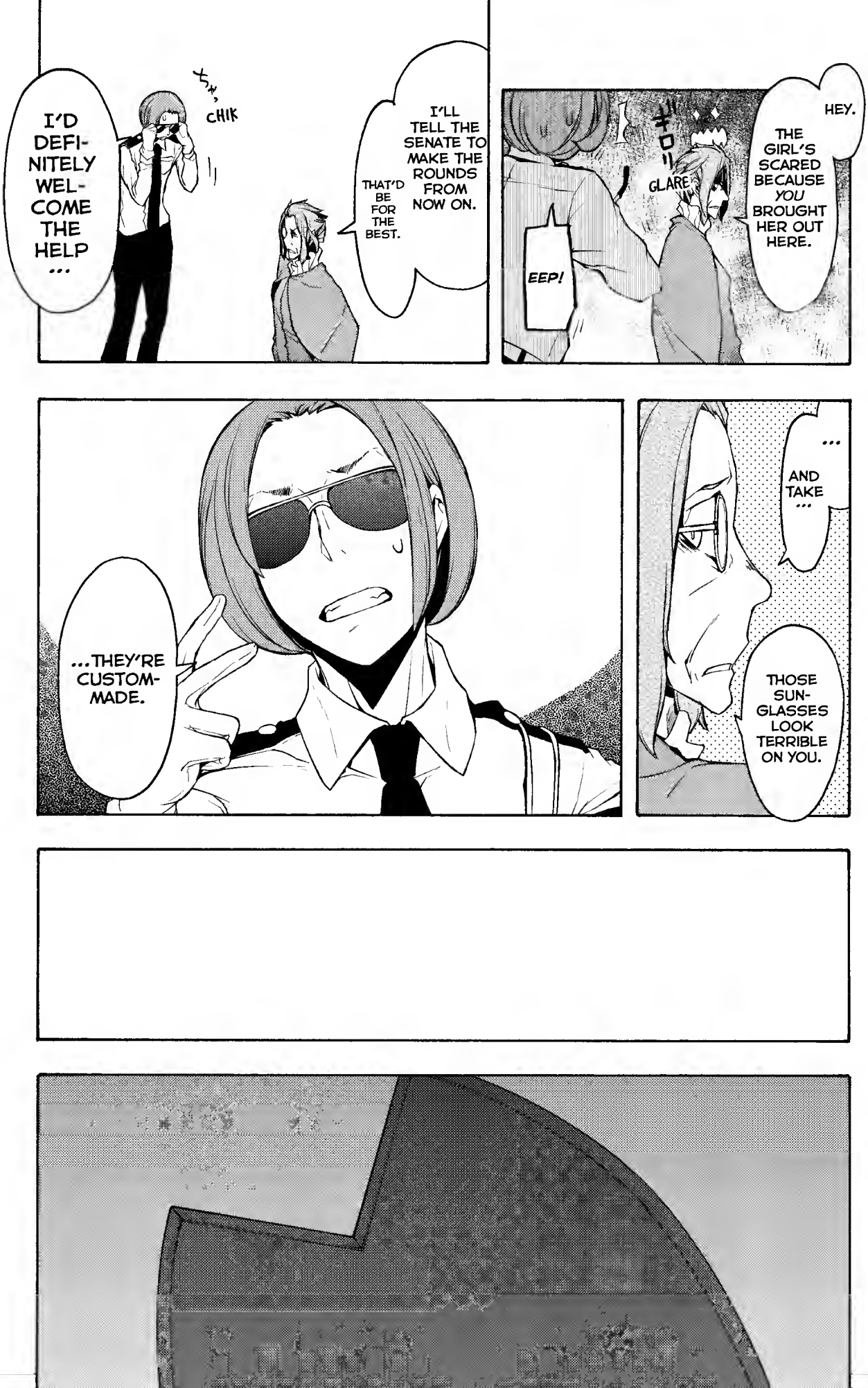
CHATTER
OVER HERE.
CHATTER
WHERE?
LINE UP HERE.

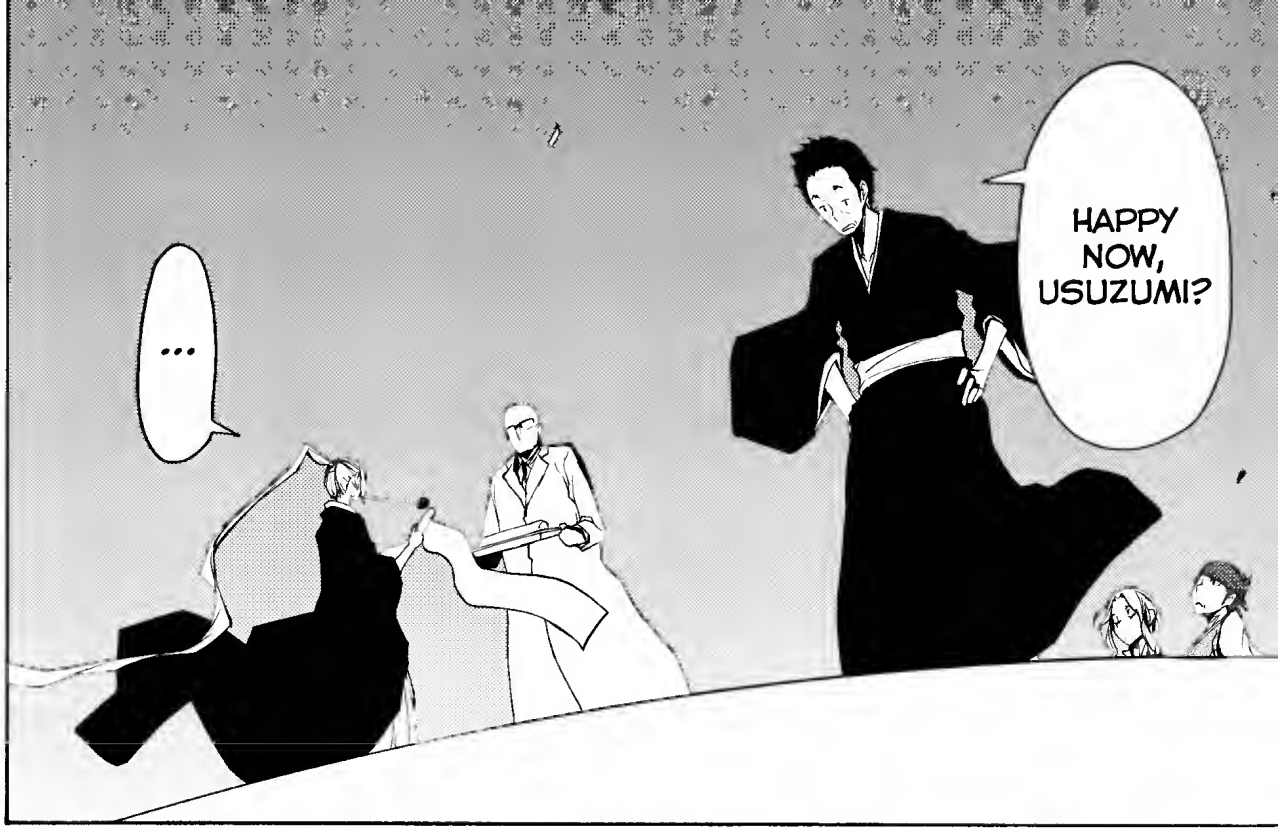

WAAAH
うぁ〜ん〜
...DEMON EXAMINATIONS, EH?

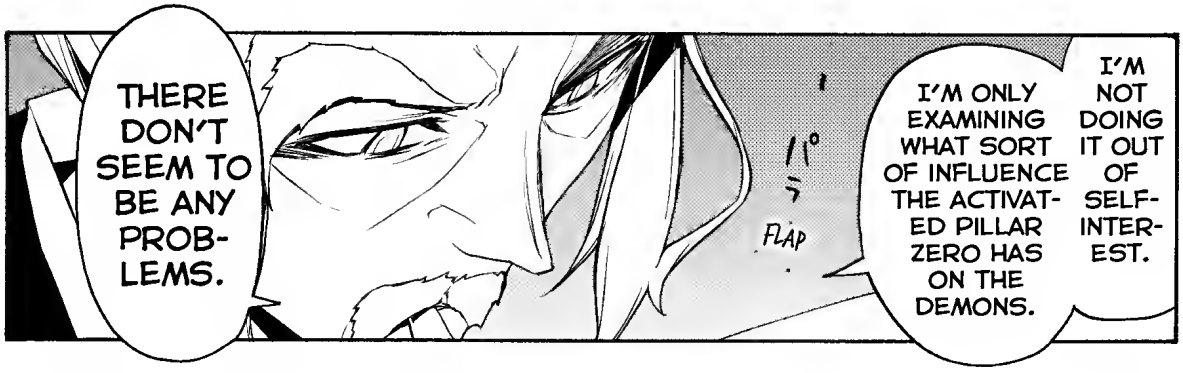

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M SCARED!
IT AIN'T SCARY, REALLY.
...
KID WON'T STOP CRY-ING...
A CHILD OF THE LOST GENERA-TION...
HM ...
A SATORI DEMON, HUH?

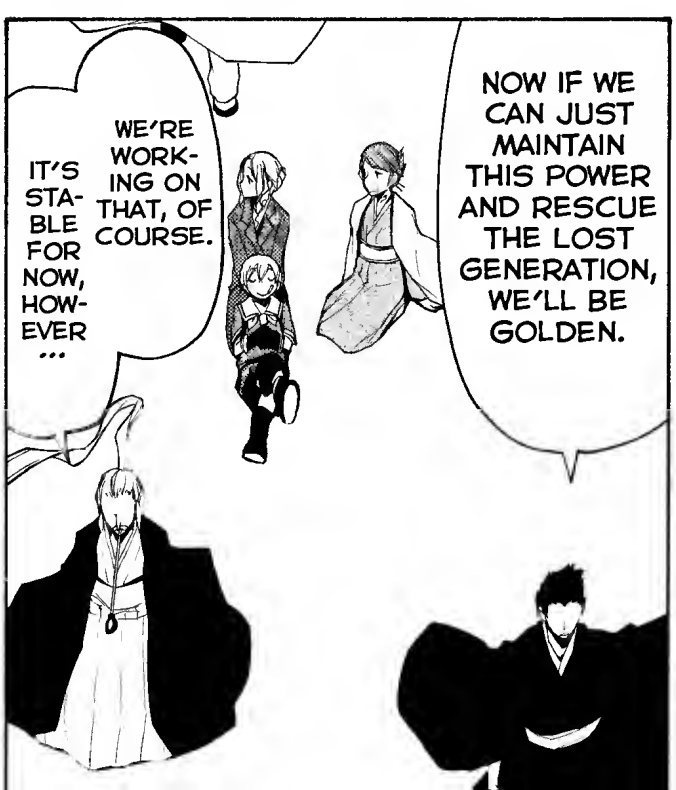

POOF
HAT.
SHORT-CUT.
BZZT
HERE, WEAR THIS.
SHOOP
WAH!
YOU'LL HEAR THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO,
SO KEEP THIS ON, ALL RIGHT?
MRF
MRF
IT'S TO NIP BAD HABITS IN THE BUD.
YOU MUSTN'T RELY ON THE SATORI'S POWER.
WHAT WAS THAT?!
THAT WAS AMAZING!
BOING
BOING
...HM.

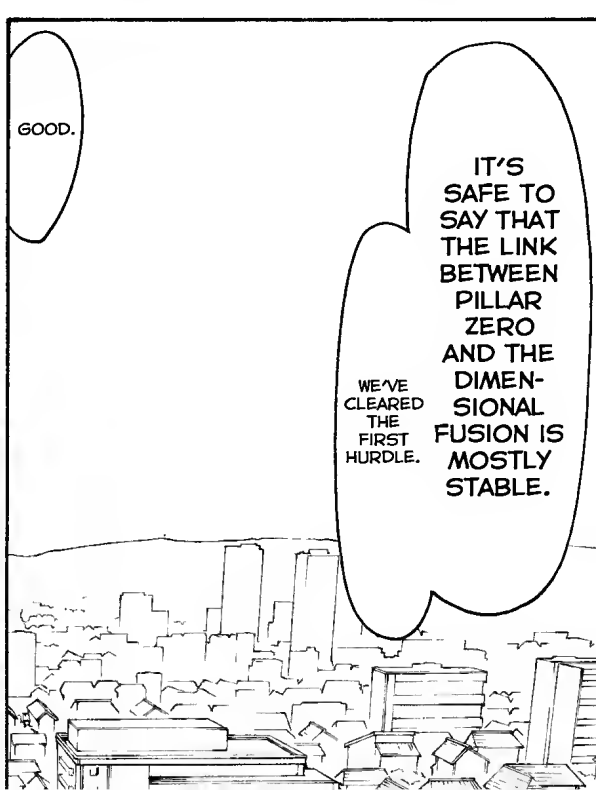

SO COOL!
WHAAAT? BUT IT'S SO COOL!
KIDS USUALLY GET SCARED WHEN THEY SEE KOTO-DAMA.
THAT'S ODD.
HUH?
IF YOU EVER MEET ANOTHER KO-TODAMA USER, DON'T BE AFRAID AND BE FRIENDLY WITH THEM, TOO, Y'HEAR?
WHY, THANK YOU.
I JUST THINK SO!
I THINK I CAN BE FRIENDS WITH THEM!
DON'T WOR-RY!
UMM ...
HMM.
I GUESS THAT'S A POOR WAY TO ASK.
SHEESH.

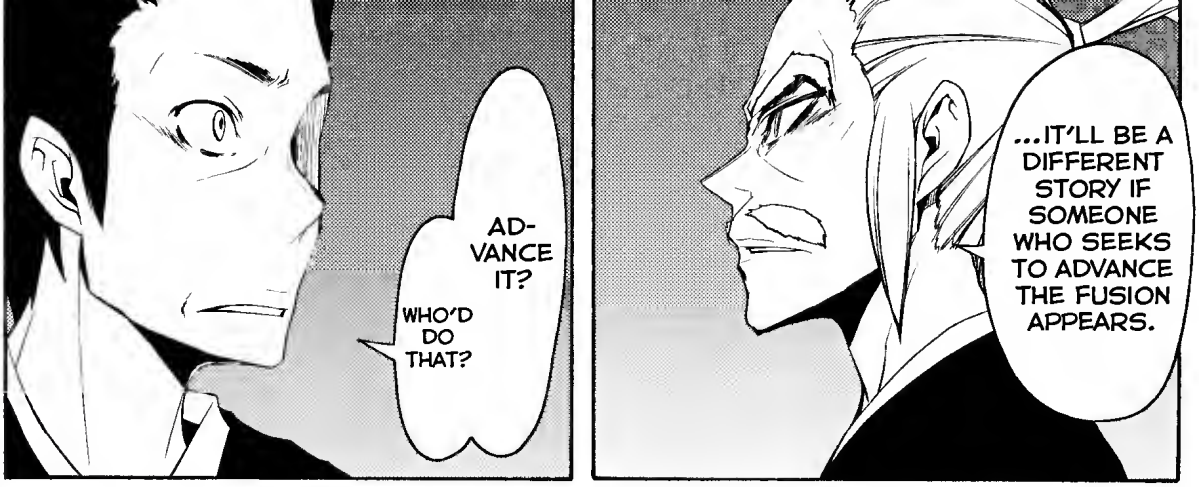

I'D DEFINITELY WELCOME THE HELP ...
CHIK
I'LL TELL THE SENATE TO MAKE THE ROUNDS FROM NOW ON.
THAT'D BE FOR THE BEST.
HEY.
THE GIRL'S SCARED BECAUSE YOU BROUGHT HER OUT HERE.
GLARE
EEP!
...
AND TAKE ...
THOSE SUNGLASSES LOOK TERRIBLE ON YOU.
...THEY'RE CUSTOMMADE.

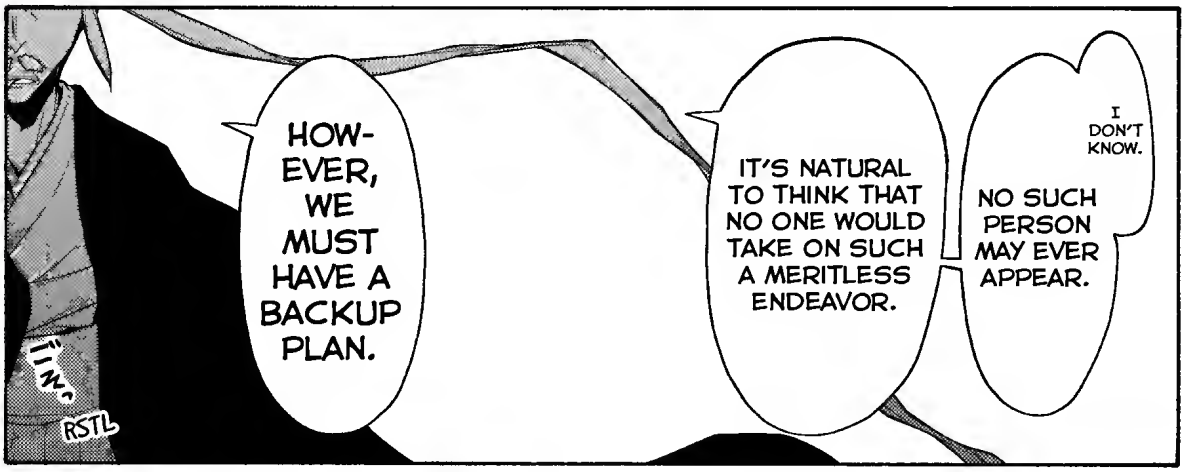

HAPPY NOW, USUZUMI?
...


I'M NOT DOING IT OUT OF SELF-INTEREST.
I'M ONLY EXAMINING WHAT SORT OF INFLUENCE THE ACTIVATED PILLAR ZERO HAS ON THE DEMONS.
FLAP
THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY PROBLEMS.

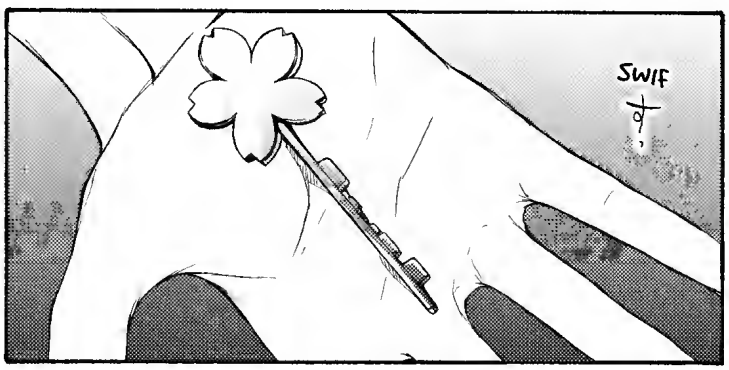

NOW IF WE CAN JUST MAINTAIN THIS POWER AND RESCUE THE LOST GENERATION, WE'LL BE GOLDEN.
WE'RE WORKING ON THAT, OF COURSE.
IT'S STABLE FOR NOW, HOWEVER ...


IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT THE LINK BETWEEN PILLAR ZERO AND THE DIMENSIONAL FUSION IS MOSTLY STABLE.
WE'VE CLEARED THE FIRST HURDLE.
GOOD.


AD-VANCE IT?
WHO'D DO THAT?
...IT'LL BE A DIFFERENT STORY IF SOMEONE WHO SEEKS TO ADVANCE THE FUSION APPEARS.


HOW-EVER, WE MUST HAVE A BACKUP PLAN.
IT'S NATURAL TO THINK THAT NO ONE WOULD TAKE ON SUCH A MERITLESS ENDEAVOR.
NO SUCH PERSON MAY EVER APPEAR.
I DON'T KNOW.
GRN, RSTL

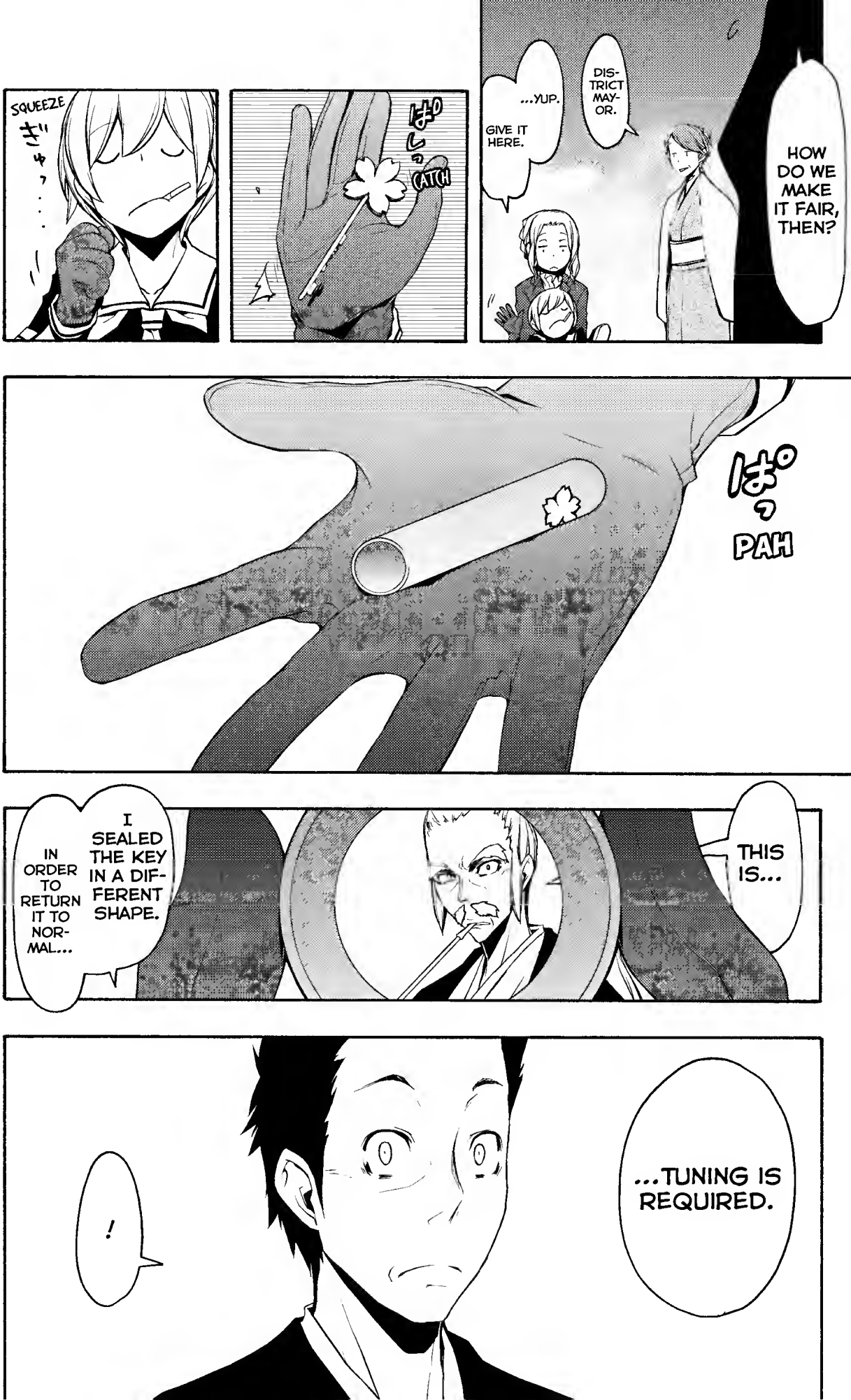
WHAT'S THAT?


SWIF

ONCE THIS IS USED, PILLAR ZERO'S OUTPUT WILL MULTIPLY A FEW HUNDRED-FOLD...
零 PILLAR
郷 ZERO
平時 AVERAGE
LOCK
THE KEY USED ...
...TO UNLOCK PILLAR ZERO'S FULL PO-TENTIAL.
最大出力
MAXIMUM OUTPUT

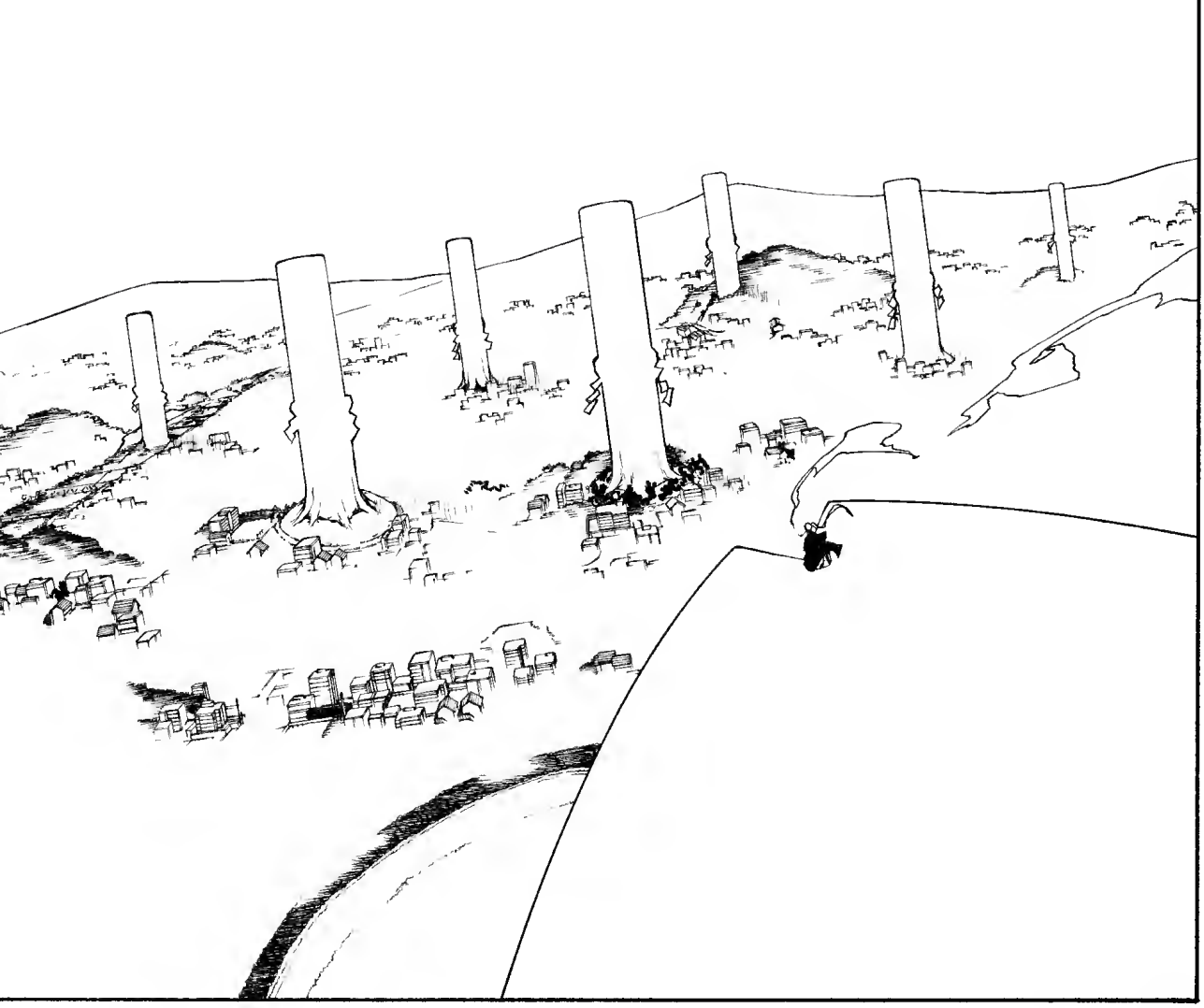
...AND THE LOST GENERATION WILL PERISH INSIDE.
I WILL BECOME A DEVIL IF NEED BE.
AND IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, I WILL USE THIS WITHOUT HESITATION.

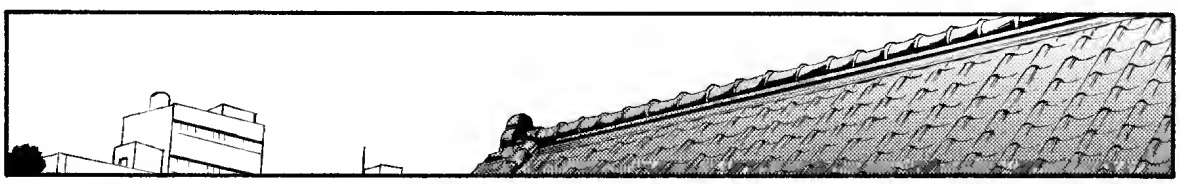
IT'S WITHOUT A DOUBT THE ONLY ONE WE WOULD HAVE AT THAT STAGE.
SAY WHAT YOU WILL, BUT THIS WILL BE OUR ONLY MEANS OF SAVING THE WORLD.
SKF
NO, YOU WON'T. I'M GOING TO SNAP THAT IN TWO RIGHT NOW.
...
YOUR ARBITRARY DECISION WILL BREAK HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE.
IF THAT ISN'T SELFISH-NESS, THEN WHAT IS?
AS MAYOR, I HAVE TO SAY THAT ISN'T VERY FAIR.
SWIF
MACHI ...

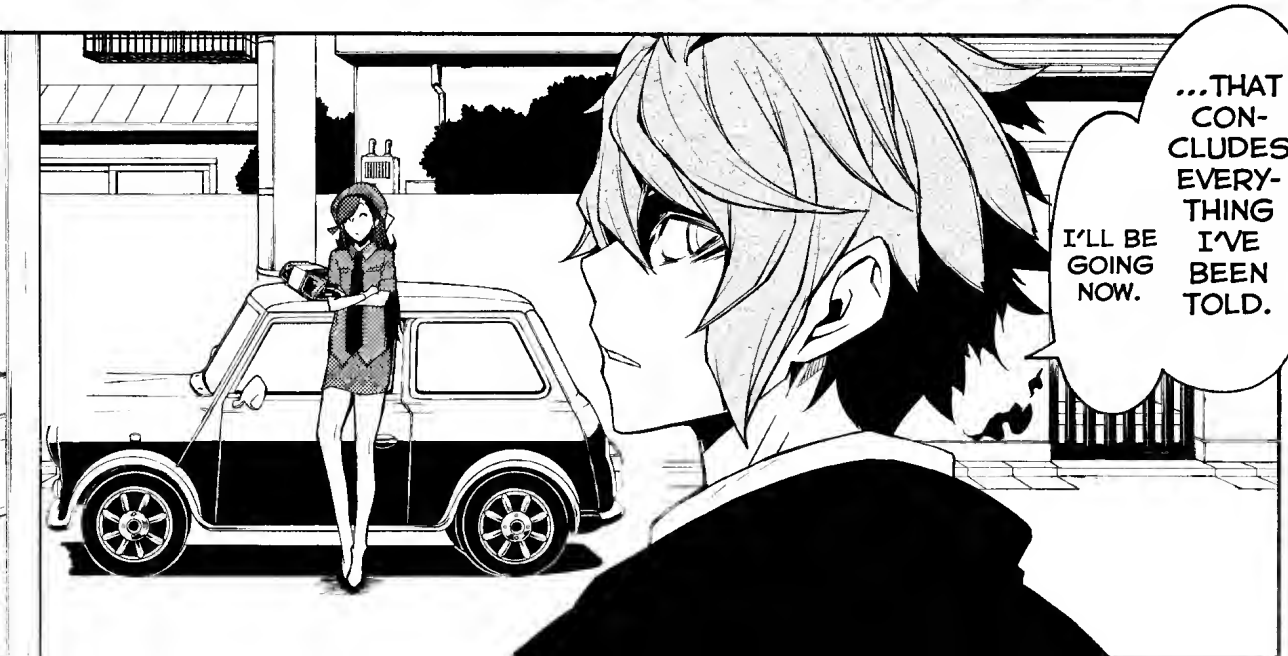

HOW DO WE MAKE IT FAIR, THEN?
DISTRICT MAYOR.
...YUP.
GIVE IT HERE.
ぱしっ
CATCH
SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ・・・
ぱっ
PAH
THIS IS...
I SEALED THE KEY IN A DIFFERENT SHAPE.
IN ORDER TO RETURN IT TO NORMAL...
...TUNING IS REQUIRED.
!

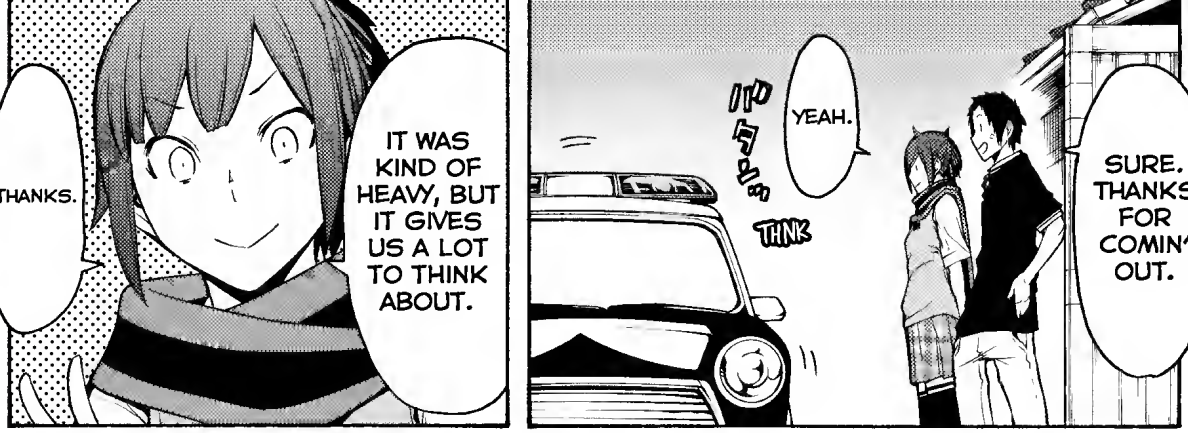
...AND THE HII-ZUMIS...
NOW, IN ORDER TO USE THAT, BOTH THE IYOS...
CATCH
YOU KEEP IT, USU-ZUMI.
THAT'S NOT...
IF YOU EVER WANT TO USE IT, TELL MAKI-HARU.
...MUST AGREE TO DO SO.
ACCEPT THIS CONDITION, USUZUMI.
CAN YOU REALLY SAVE THE WORLD IF YOU CAN'T EVEN CONVINCE A SINGLE PERSON?

ON MY PER-SON ...
PUT IT IN YOUR WALLET, WHATEVER, JUST KEEP IT ON YOUR PERSON AT ALL TIMES.
DON'T GO LOSIN' THAT, NOW.
FINE.
WE'RE NO MATCH FOR MACHI ...



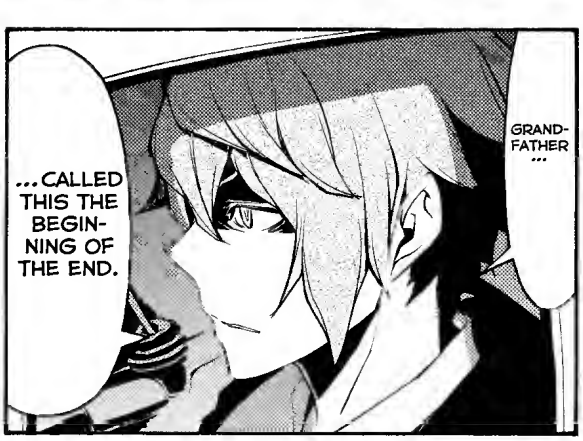


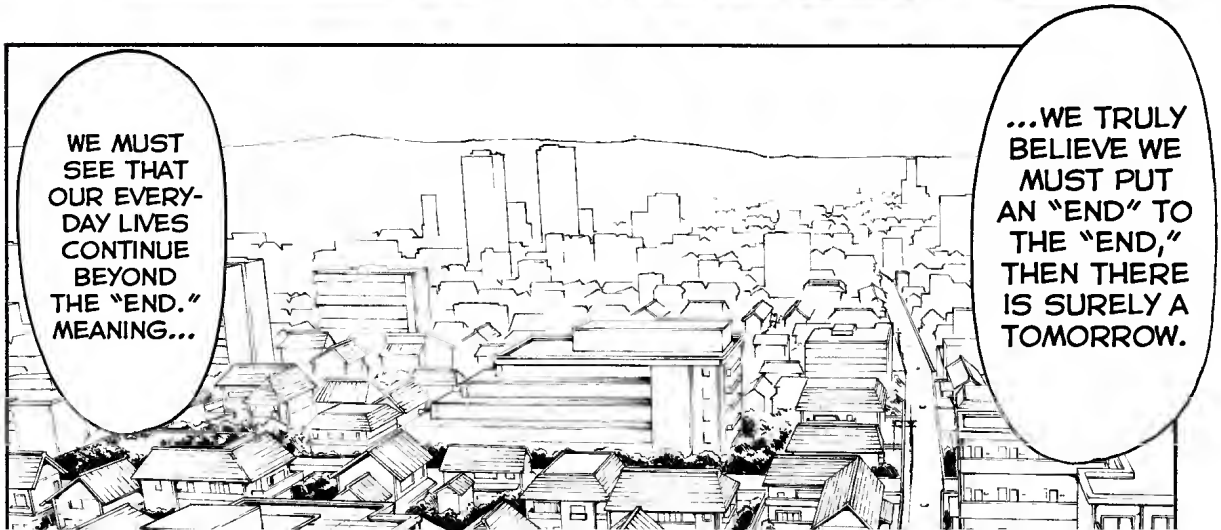

...THAT CONCLUDES EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN TOLD.
I'LL BE GOING NOW.


THANKS.
IT WAS KIND OF HEAVY, BUT IT GIVES US A LOT TO THINK ABOUT.
ITO TRIP
YEAH.
THINK
SURE. THANKS FOR COMIN' OUT.

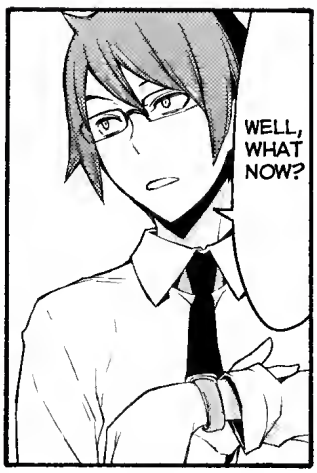
...
LUCKY...
COME BY FOR DINNER AGAIN SOMETIME! I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING GOOD AS THANKS.

AND IF...
...AND EXHAUST ALL OPTIONS.
TO MAKE SURE THAT "END" NEVER COMES, WE MUST PUT FORTH OUR BEST EFFORT...


...CALLED THIS THE BEGINNING OF THE END.
GRANDFATHER...


WE MUST SEE THAT OUR EVERYDAY LIVES CONTINUE BEYOND THE "END." MEANING...
...WE TRULY BELIEVE WE MUST PUT AN "END" TO THE "END," THEN THERE IS SURELY A TOMORROW.

THEREFORE, AS BUT ONE FACET OF THOSE UNEVENTFUL DAYS...
...IT'S JUST AS IMPORTANT TO PUT EFFORT INTO MAINTAINING OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.
...OH, BUT DIDN'T THE SENATE CUT EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION?
BUT WHY RICE?
Y'KNOW. HE LIVED IN ENGLAND BEFORE
GOT IT.
RICE?
...I SUPPOSE FILLING UP ON RICE AT YOUR HOUSE ISN'T BEYOND THE QUESTION.
IF IT'S WITHIN THAT TIME, THEN SURE...
THERE ARE VARIOUS PROCEDURES TO FINISH, SO WE'VE BEEN GIVEN ONE WEEK'S LENIENCY.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
BOOP
WELL, LEMME GIVE YOU MY PHONE NUM–
OKAY.



95TH NIGHT PAST AND PRESENT (EPILOGUE) END

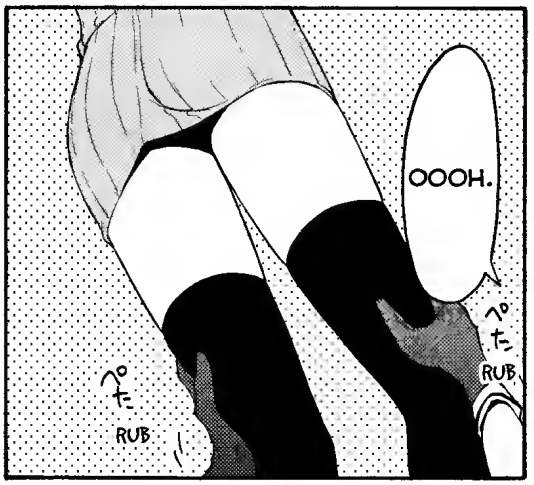
YOZAKURA
QUARTET
17

BEEP
BEEP ピ
ピッ
SHIINA-SAN, PLEASE GIVE MURASAKI EVERY-ONE'S NUMBER...

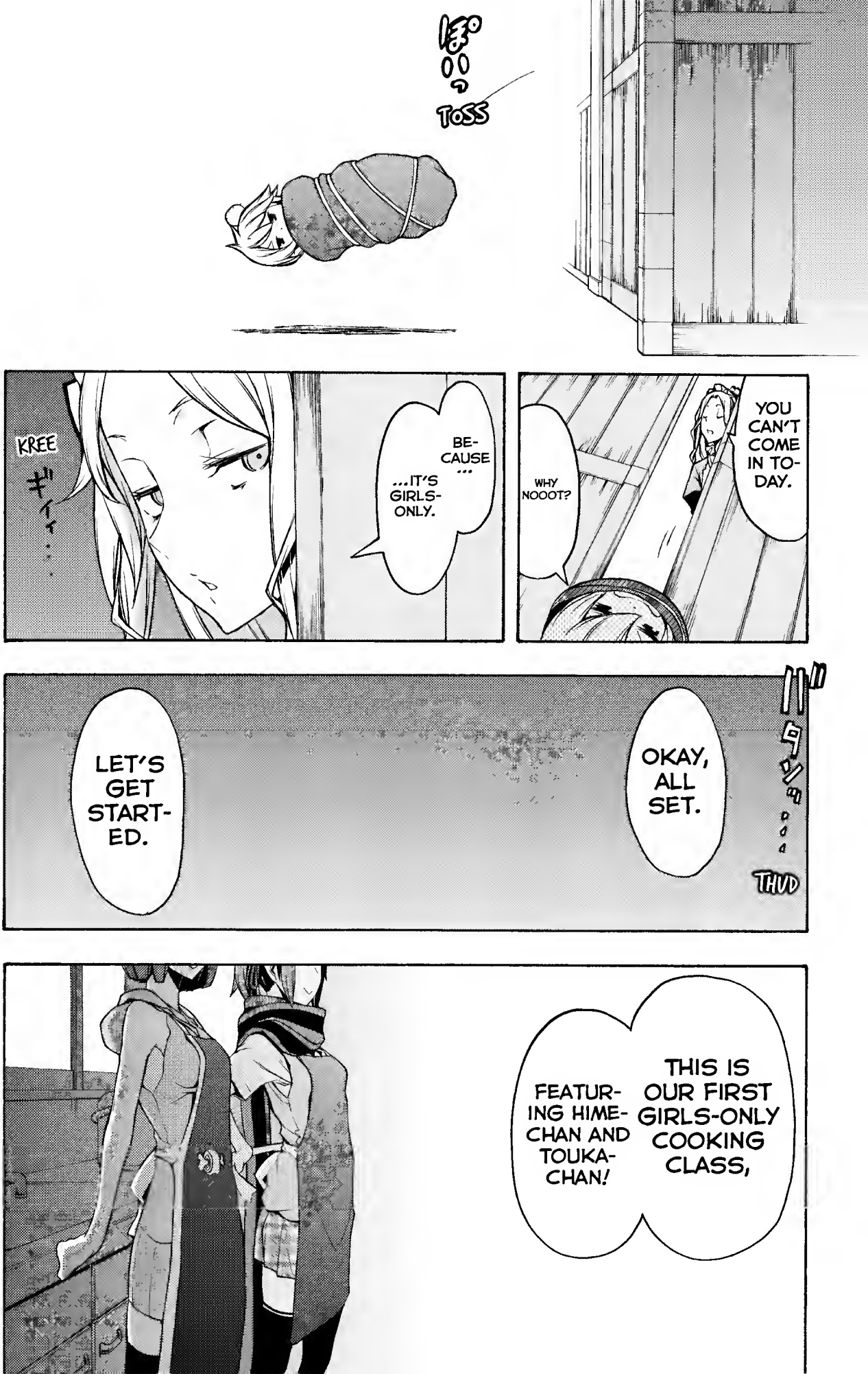
LET'S SEE. FRYPAN, FRYPAN ...
どた PIT
ばた PAT
どた PIT
HAVE YOU SEEN THE LADLE?

IT'S ON THAT SHELF!
ピンポーン DING DONG
AH! THEY'RE HERE!

HEY, GUYS.
HUB
BUB
WELCOME, EVERYONE! THANKS FOR COMING.


OOOH.
ぺた RUB
ぺた RUB

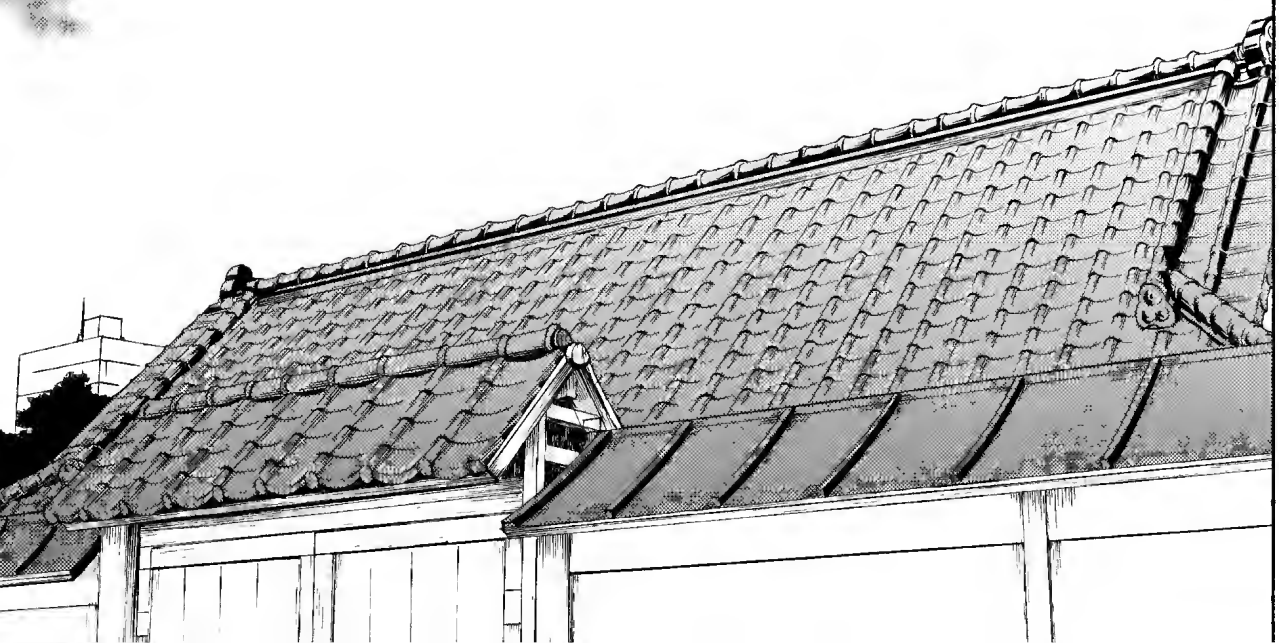
THIS IS A NICE VIEW, WATCHING YOU WORK IN THE KITCHEN.
SLIIDE
EEK ...!


TOSS
YOU CAN'T COME IN TODAY.
WHY NOOOT?
BECAUSE...
...IT'S GIRLS-ONLY.
KREE
ギィィ...
OKAY, ALL SET.
THUD
LET'S GET STARTED.
THIS IS OUR FIRST GIRLS-ONLY COOKING CLASS,
FEATURING HIME-CHAN AND TOUKA-CHAN!

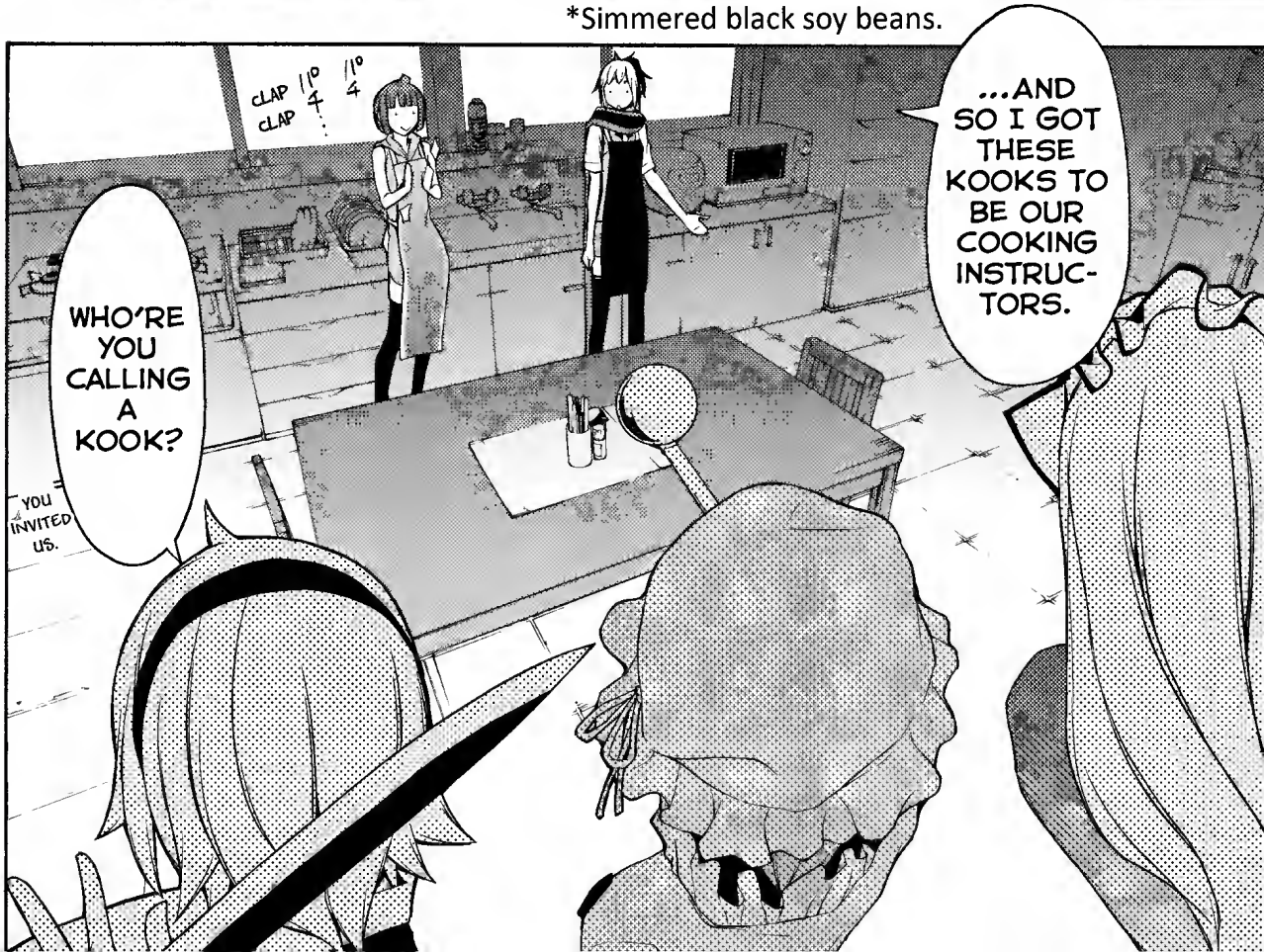
LET THE LESSON BEGIN!

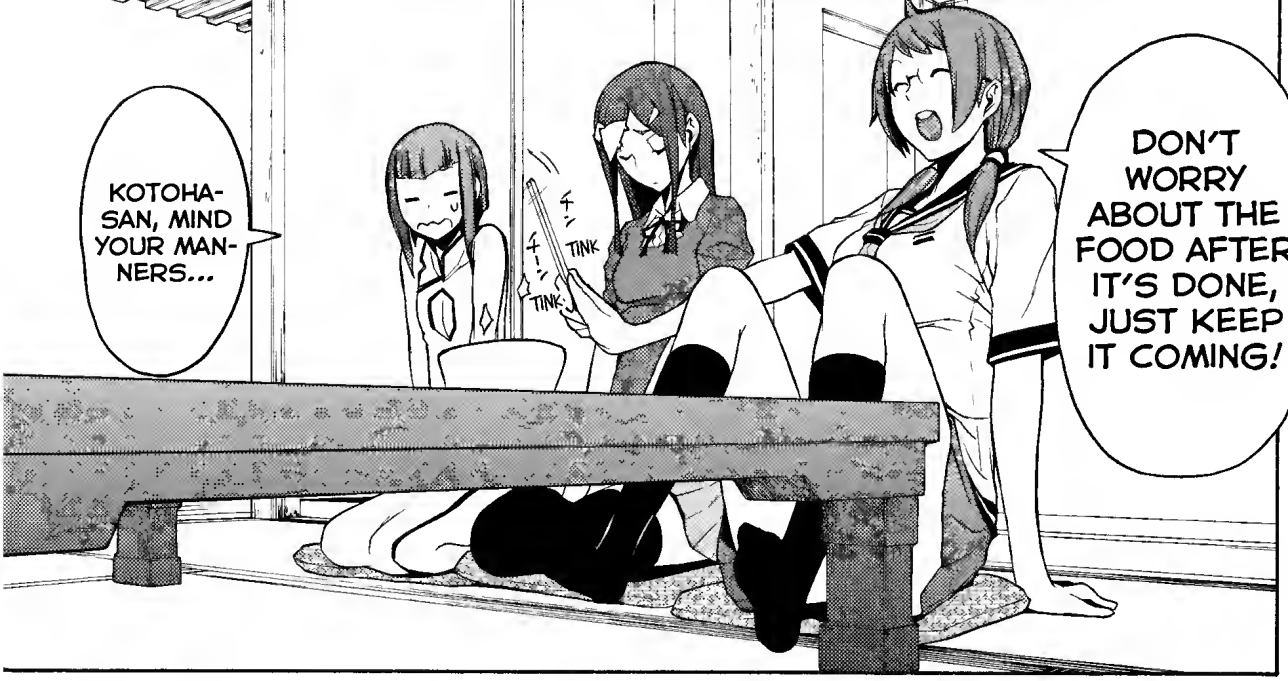
THANKS FOR ATTENDING.

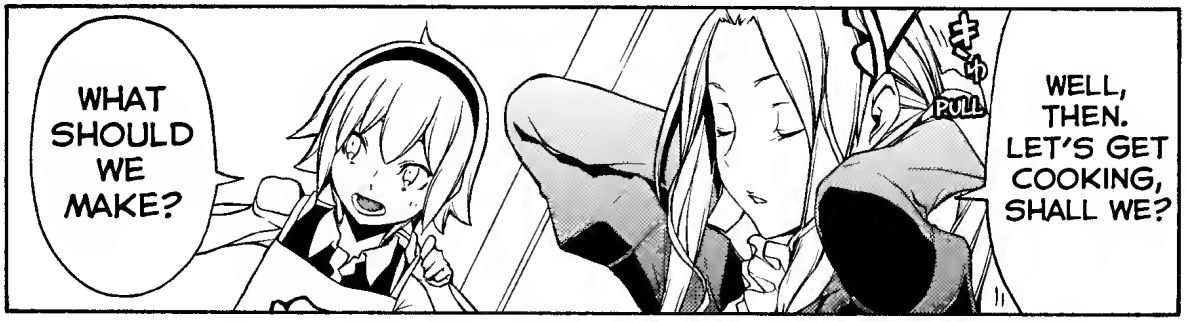
#96 GIRLS



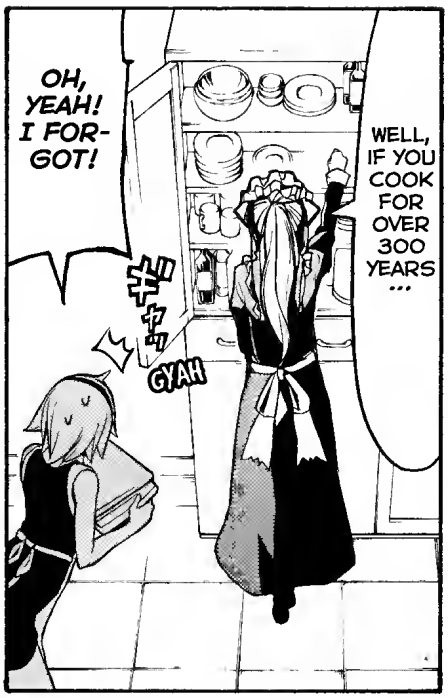
*Simmered black soy beans.



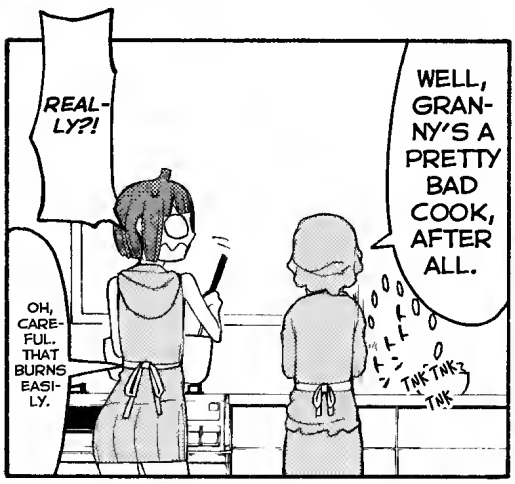




Book: Japanese Side Dishes (Tasty!)

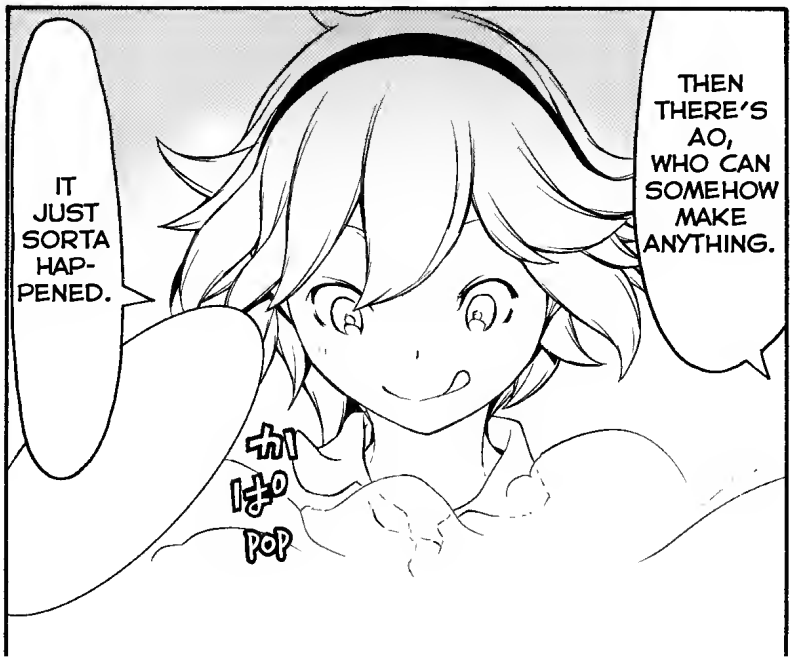

OH, YEAH! I FORGOT!
WELL, IF YOU COOK FOR OVER 300 YEARS...
GYAH

I'M KINDA SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE GOOD AT COOKING, MARIABELL-SAN!
REAL-LY?


REAL-LY?!
WELL, GRAN-NY'S A PRETTY BAD COOK, AFTER ALL.
OH, CARE-FUL. THAT BURNS EASI-LY.
トントン
TNK-TNK-TNK

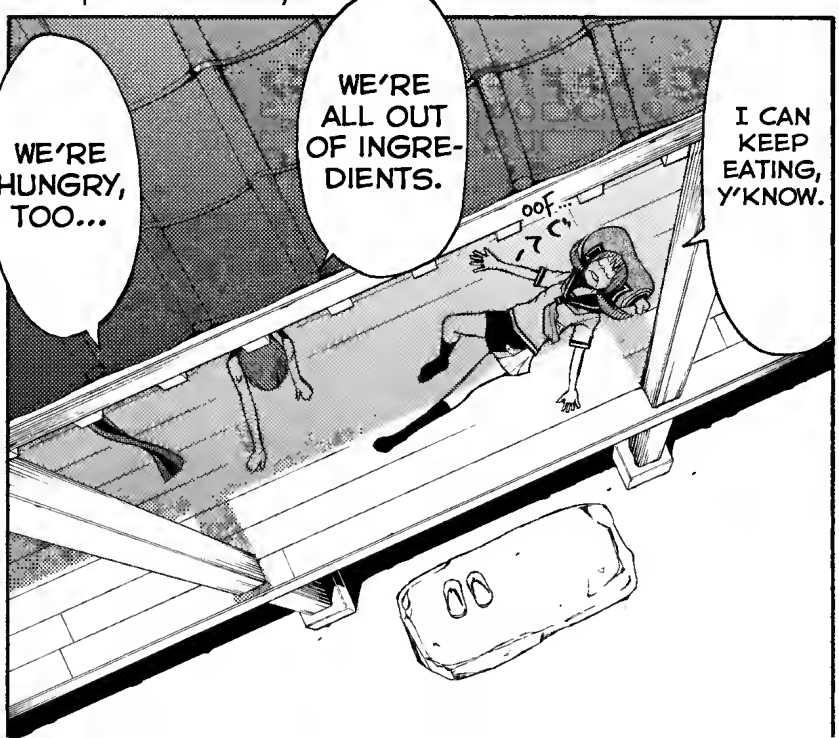
MMM...
IT MAKES SENSE FOR RIN-CHAN, SINCE SHE WORKS IN A RESTAU-RANT.
TNK-TNK
トントン
TNK TNK

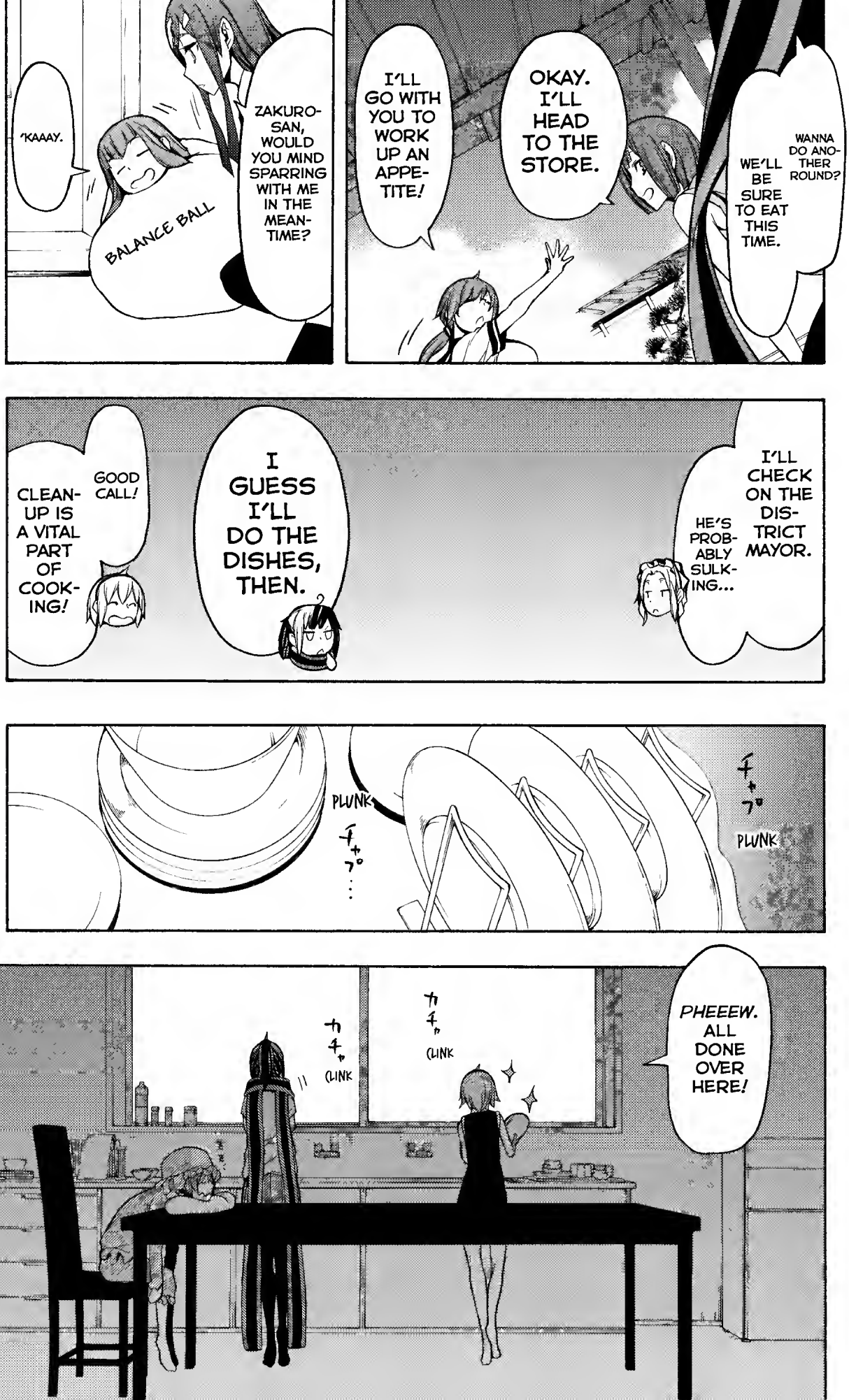
ORDER UP.
I MEAN, WE HAVE PEOPLE COME OVER FOR DINNER ALL THE TIME.


IT JUST SORTA HAP-PENED.
THEN THERE'S AO, WHO CAN SOMEHOW MAKE ANYTHING.
カリッ
POP

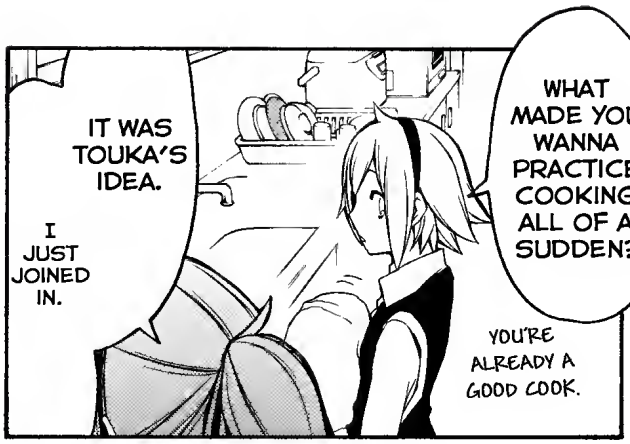
ぱちん
CLAP
TIME TO DIG IN!
NOW, WHICH TO START WITH...
MAKE SURE YOU TASTE TEST, OKAY? DON'T JUST PIG OUT.
I KNOOOW.
THANK YOU FOR...
SWIF
...THE MEAL.
SHOOP
THERE SHE GOES, IAI-EATING!
HOW CAN YOU SAVOR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?!

*A Japanese comedy trio




ZAKURO-SAN, WOULD YOU MIND SPARRING WITH ME IN THE MEAN-TIME?
'KAAAY.
BALANCE BALL
I'LL GO WITH YOU TO WORK UP AN APPE-TITE!
OKAY. I'LL HEAD TO THE STORE.
WANNA DO ANO-THER ROUND?
WE'LL BE SURE TO EAT THIS TIME.
I'LL CHECK ON THE DIS-TRICT MAYOR.
HE'S PROB-ABLY SULK-ING...
I GUESS I'LL DO THE DISHES, THEN.
GOOD CALL!
CLEAN-UP IS A VITAL PART OF COOK-ING!
PLUNK
PLUNK
CLINK
CLINK
PHEEEW. ALL DONE OVER HERE!

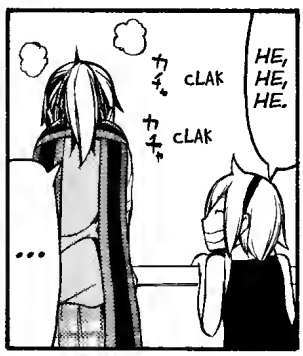
I'D BEEN PRACTICING HERE AND THERE, SO I THOUGHT I'D JUST REALLY GET INTO IT.
HMM ...


WHAT MADE YOU WANNA PRACTICE COOKING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
YOU'RE ALREADY A GOOD COOK.
IT WAS TOUKA'S IDEA.
I JUST JOINED IN.

YOU WANT TO COOK FOR AKINA-SAN, DON'T YOU?

BUT HE'S A BETTER COOK THAN ME...
IT BACK-FIRED ON HIM!

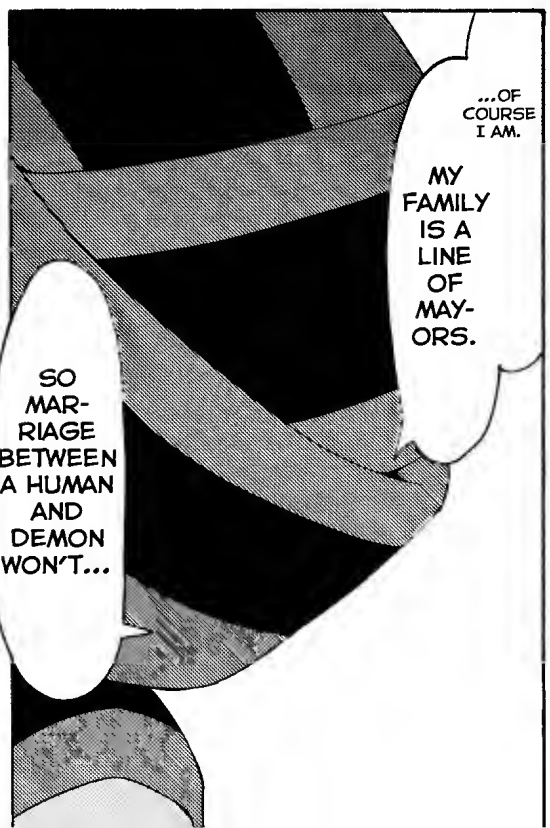
WELL, AKINA'S BEEN BUSY...
...SO I THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE IF I COULD COOK FOR HIM.
SO ARE YOU.


HE, HE, HE.
CLAK
CLAK
...

I THINK YOU GUYS MAKE A GOOD MATCH.
BRIDAL TRAIN-ING! BRIDAL TRAIN-ING!
KSHH
UH-OH ...
PHEW, IT DIDN'T BREAK.
DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT OUT OF NOWHERE ...
IT WOULDN'T WORK OUT, ANYWAY.
AFTER ALL, WE'RE A HUMAN AND A DEMON.
CLAK
WE CAN'T HAVE BABIES ...
...
NO WORRIES THERE. JUST LOOK AT MY FOSTER PARENTS.
MMM!
OH, YEAH. THOSE TWO ARE...
YUP, A HUMAN-DEMON COUPLE.

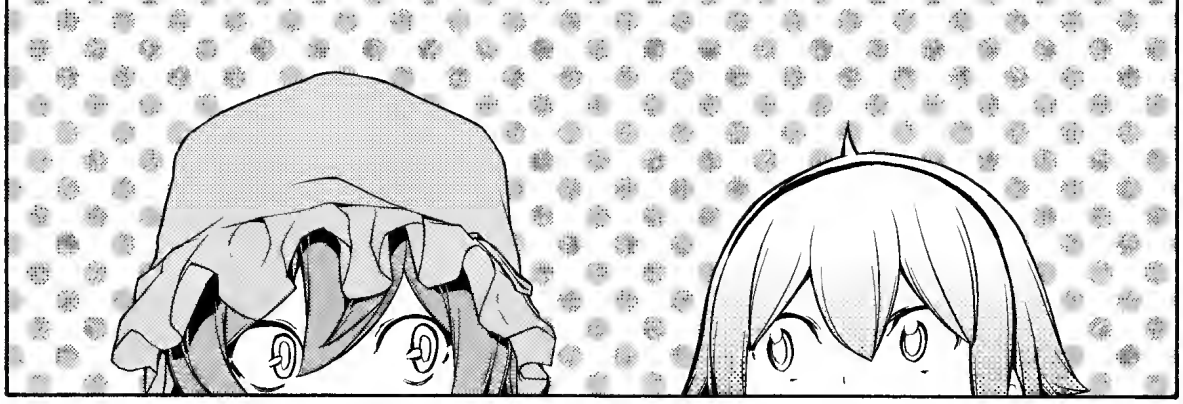
AND THEY ADOPTED ME AND ZAKURO-CHAN,
SO DON'T WORRY!

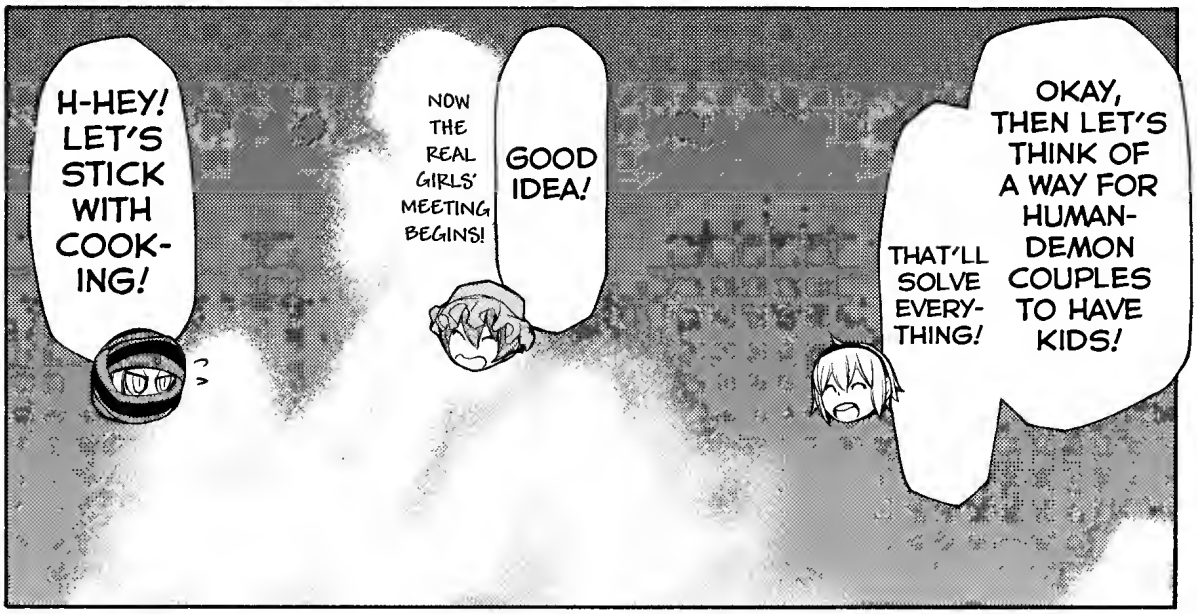
...

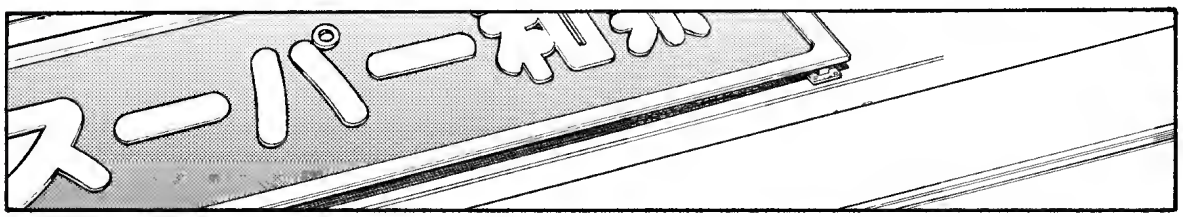

...OF COURSE I AM.
MY FAMILY IS A LINE OF MAY-ORS.
SO MAR-RIAGE BETWEEN A HUMAN AND DEMON WON'T...

SHE CO-COONED.
WRAP WRAP

LIKE BABIES AND STUFF.
I'M SUR-PRISED YOU'RE THINKING SO FAR AHEAD, HIME-CHAN.
BUT Y'KNOW,





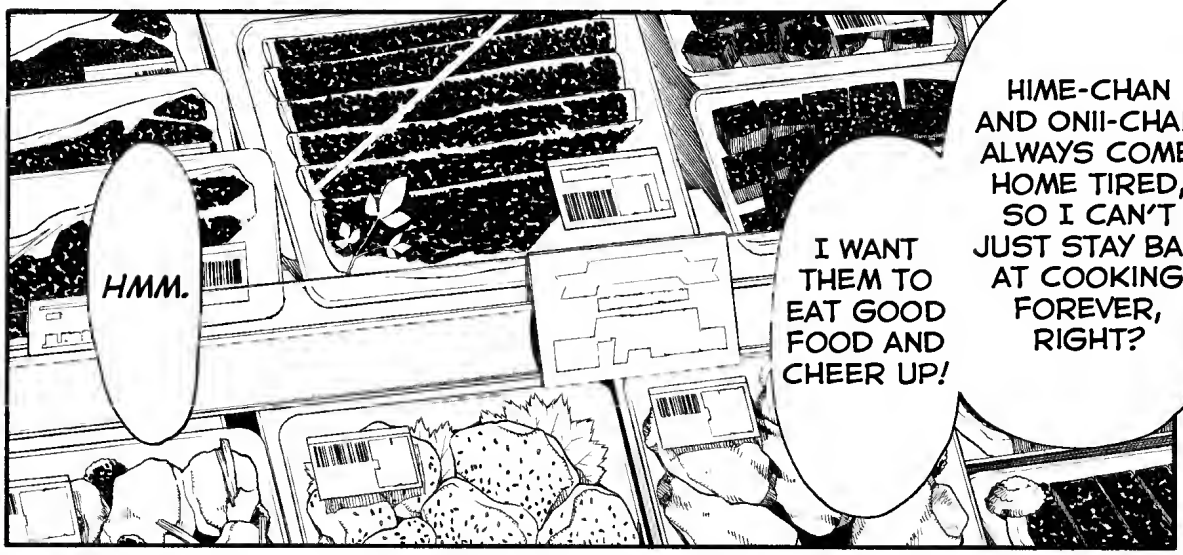


Sign: Supermarket Izumi

NOTHING SAYS GERMANY LIKE SAUSAGE!
GERMAN
BUT THOSE ARE PROBABLY DOMESTIC!
ALSO, THAT'S HAM.

OH! THIS LOOKS GOOD, TOO.
THAT'S TOO MUCH, KOTOHA-CHAN!
AND IT'S ALL SAUSAGES!

WHAT MADE YOU WANNA UP YOUR COOKING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
IT WASN'T EXACTLY SUDDEN.

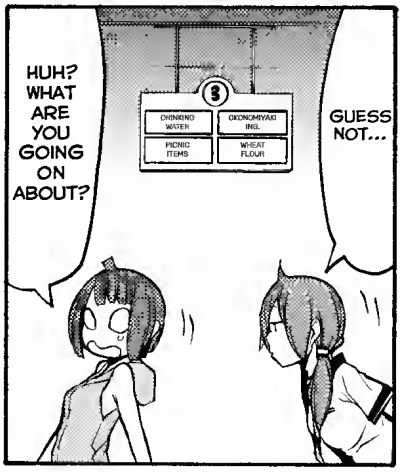

HIME-CHAN AND ONII-CHAN ALWAYS COME HOME TIRED, SO I CAN'T JUST STAY BAD AT COOKING FOREVER, RIGHT?
I WANT THEM TO EAT GOOD FOOD AND CHEER UP!
HMM.

AND COOK FOR AKINA, I'M SURE.

MUMBLE MUMBLE
WHAT ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT, KOTOHA-CHAN?
BUT I WON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD ...
...
YOU COULD PROBABLY BAG HIM EASILY IF YOU JUST FLAUNT THIS VOLUPTUOUS BODY OF YOURS.
NOT AGAIN!
GYAHHH!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
HO HO HO
ARE YOU THE SHRIMP?!
FWIP
OH, BUT ...
...SHE DIDN'T SEEM BOTHERED WHEN HIME HAD AKINA'S HEAD IN HER LAP.
IT'S HARD TO GET A READ ON HER.
IS SHE OVER HIM?

WHAT A COINCI-DENCE!
AKINA-SAN!
OOP, HEY, GUYS.
WH-WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
AAAKINA! I WANNA EAT TARAKO* PASTA!
MUSH
DING
*Pasta tossed with salted roe.
...
THROB
TH-THANKS ...
THAT LOOKS HEAVY. PASS IT HERE.
SWIPE
WHOA!
SHOVE
HEY! BREAK IT UP! WE'RE IN PUB-LIC!

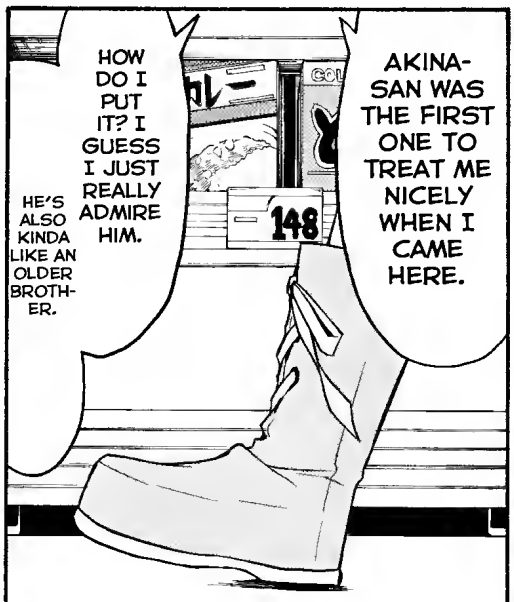
MRRF
もが
もが
MRRF
AAH! WHAT'RE YOU BLAB-BING?!
OH, JUST HOW YOU STILL LIKE AKI-

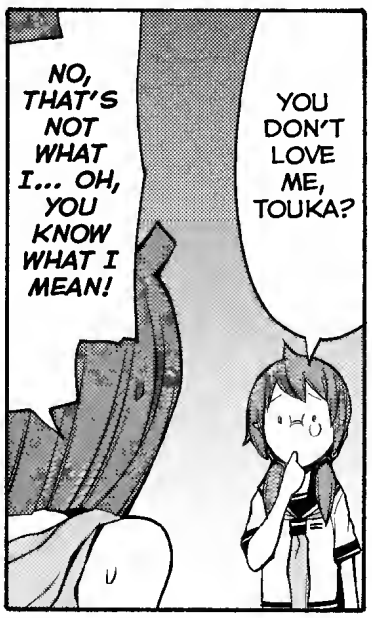

HUH? WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT?
GUESS NOT...
DRINKING WATER
OKONOMIYAKI ING.
PICNIC ITEMS
WHEAT FLOUR

I LOVE HER, TOO, SO...
LATELY, I DON'T REALLY MIND WHEN IT'S HIME-CHAN.

HUH? MMM...
SO I WAS JUST CURI-OUS.
WELL, YOU WERE PRETTY QUIET WHEN HIME GAVE AKINA A LAP PILLOW THE OTHER DAY,

HMM.


HOW DO I PUT IT? I GUESS I JUST REALLY ADMIRE HIM.
HE'S ALSO KINDA LIKE AN OLDER BROTH-ER.
AKINA-SAN WAS THE FIRST ONE TO TREAT ME NICELY WHEN I CAME HERE.
148

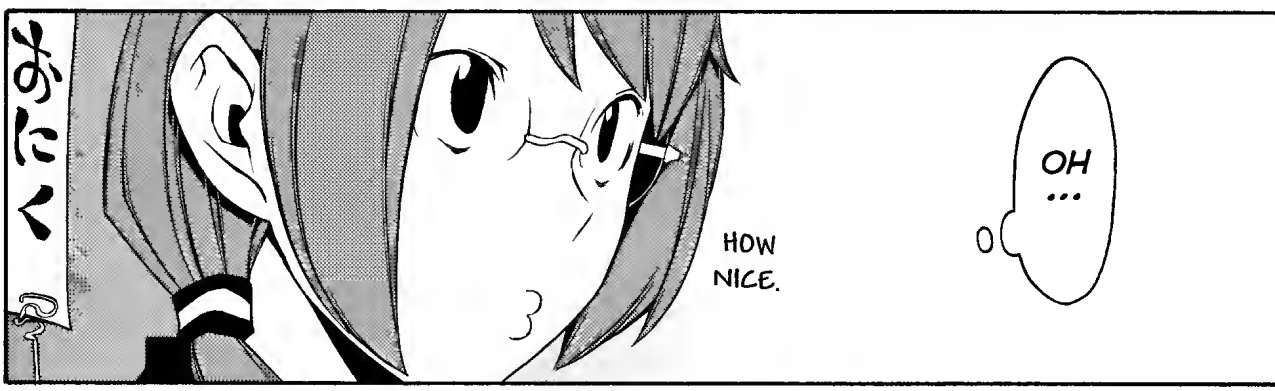

NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I... OH, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!
YOU DON'T LOVE ME, TOUKA?

*"Murasaki" is Japanese for purple.

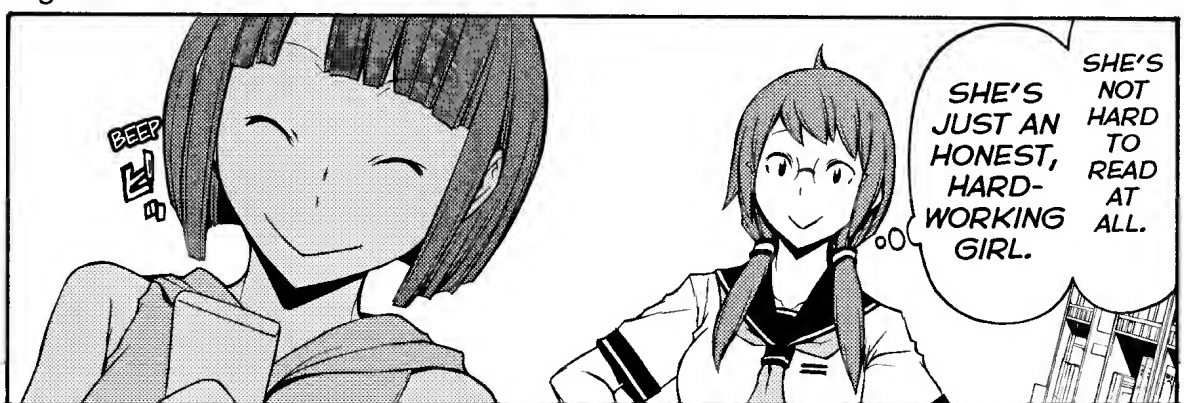
I SWEAR! ALWAYS OUT OF NOWHERE!
YOU SURE?
POSITIVE! PROBABLY ...
HE'S MORE LIKE A DIFFICULT LITTLE BROTHER.
ER ...
AKINA-SAN IS THE BIG BROTHER...
MURASAKI-KUN IS THE LITTLE BROTHER...
TAP
WHY ARE THERE NO GUYS WHO FIT ME?!
WAAAH
おーん
DON'T SAY FIT.
HMM. I FEEL LIKE EATING LIVER AND CHIVE STIR-FRY.
YOU LIKE LIVER, AKINA-SAN?
HM? YEAH, I DO.
I SEE ...
BEEP BOOP BAP
ピッポッパ
WHISPER
RIN-CHAN? CAN YOU MAKE LIVER AND CHIVE STIR-FRY?
YOU BET!

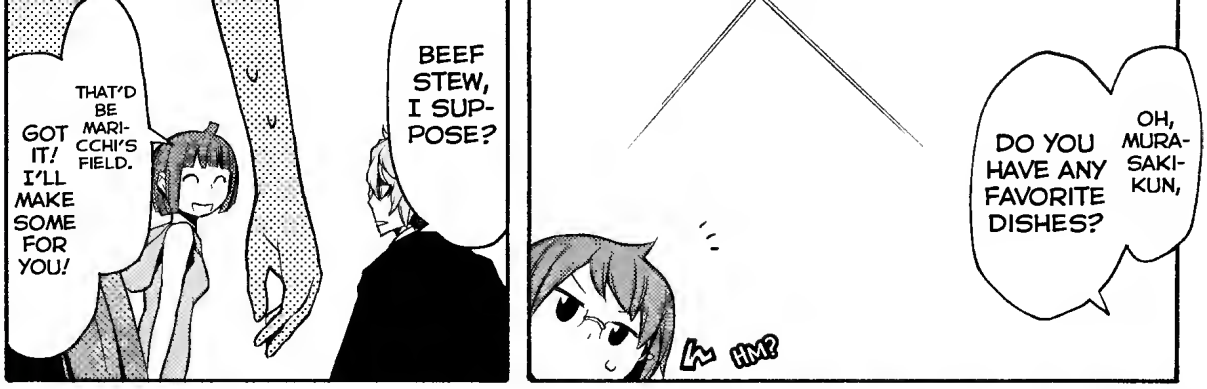
GREAT! GIVE ME THE INGRE-DIENTS!
LIVER, CHIVES ...
SHE'S TRYING TO PULL AHEAD!
HOW WILY!
OH, CAN YOU PUT HIME-CHAN ON?
YEAH. UH-HUH.
YUP, WE'RE MAKING LIVER AND CHIVES.

AKINA-SAN SAID IT'S ONE OF HIS FAVOR-ITES!
LET'S SEE WHO CAN MAKE IT BETTER!

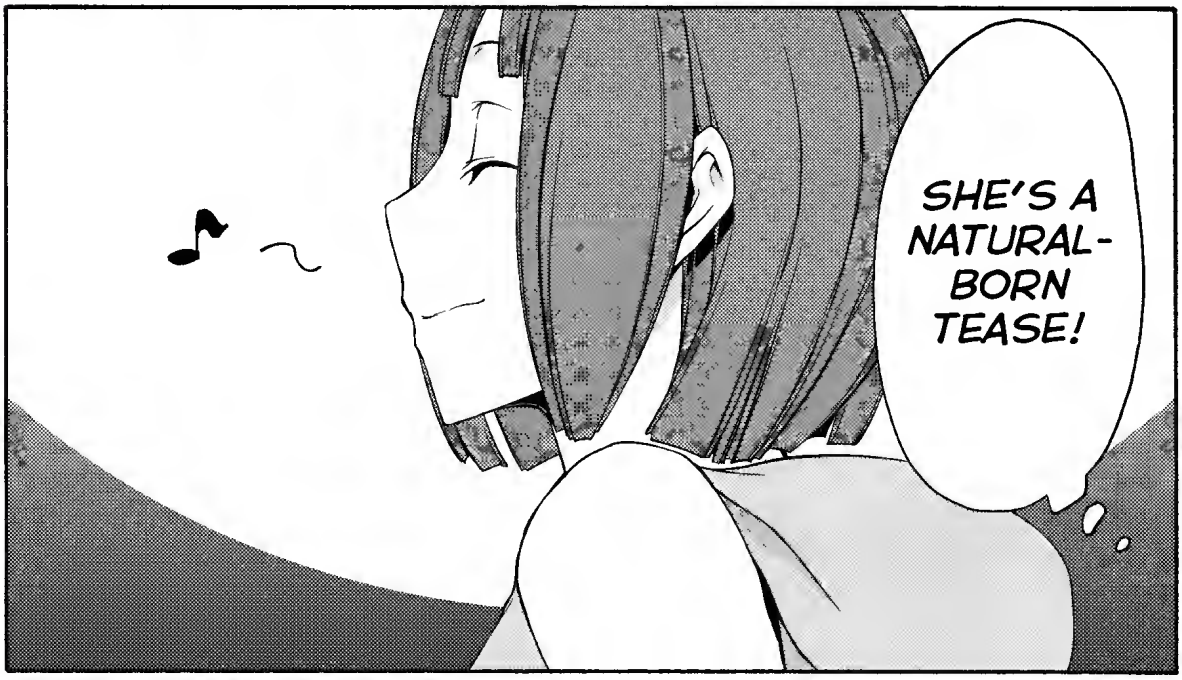

OH ...
HOW NICE.
にく

Sign: Meat


SHE'S NOT HARD TO READ AT ALL.
SHE'S JUST AN HONEST, HARD-WORKING GIRL.
BEEP


OH, MURA-SAKI-KUN,
DO YOU HAVE ANY FAVORITE DISHES?
HM?
BEEF STEW, I SUP-POSE?
THAT'D BE MARI-CCHI'S FIELD.
GOT IT! I'LL MAKE SOME FOR YOU!

IT'LL BE REALLY GOOD, SO MAKE SURE YOU EAT IT ALL, OKAY?
THAT'S RIGHT ...
TOUKA'S TOO PURE AND HARD-WORKING.


SHE'S A NATURAL-BORN TEASE!

YOU'RE IN FOR A LOT, MURA-SAKI...
GOOD LUCK!

SUPPOSEDLY HAS A LOT OF SECRET ADMIRERS IN TOWN...

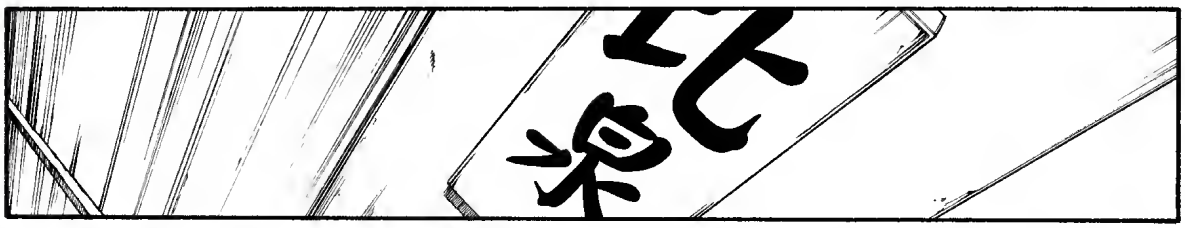
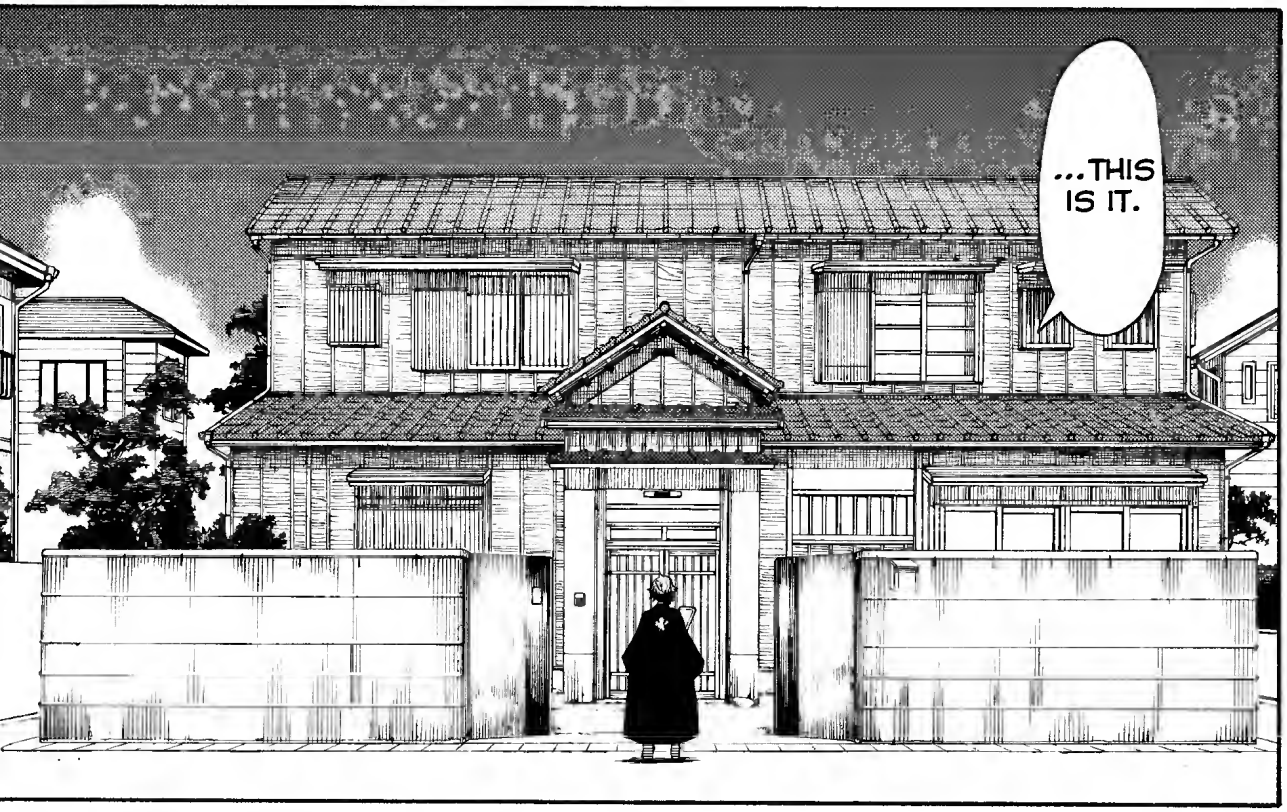
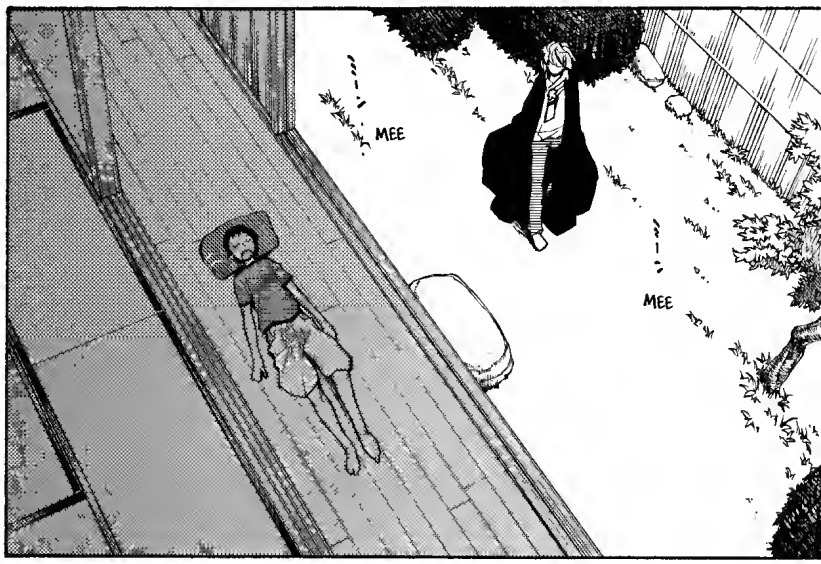


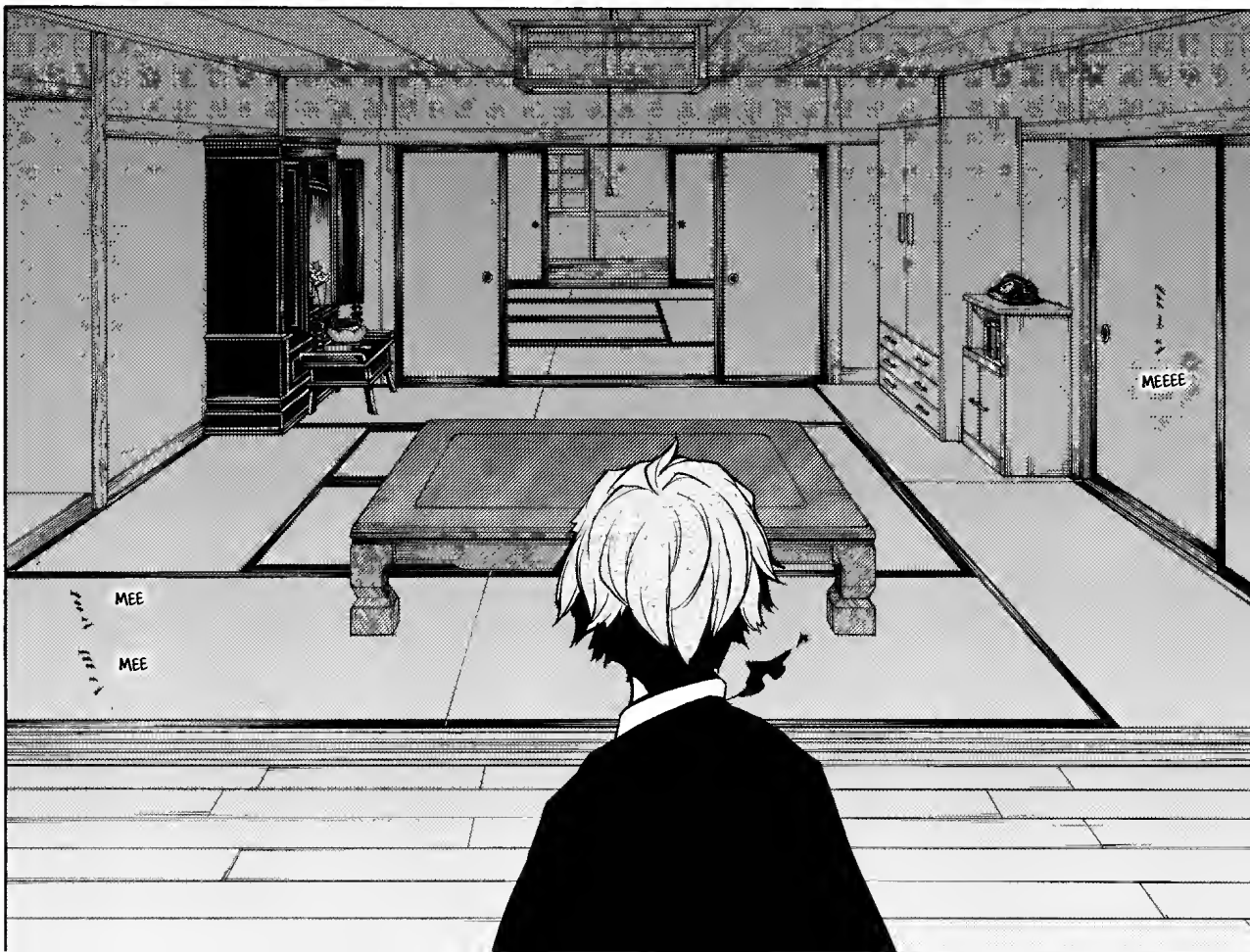
Plate: Hiizumi



SNoRE
ｶﾊﾞｰ

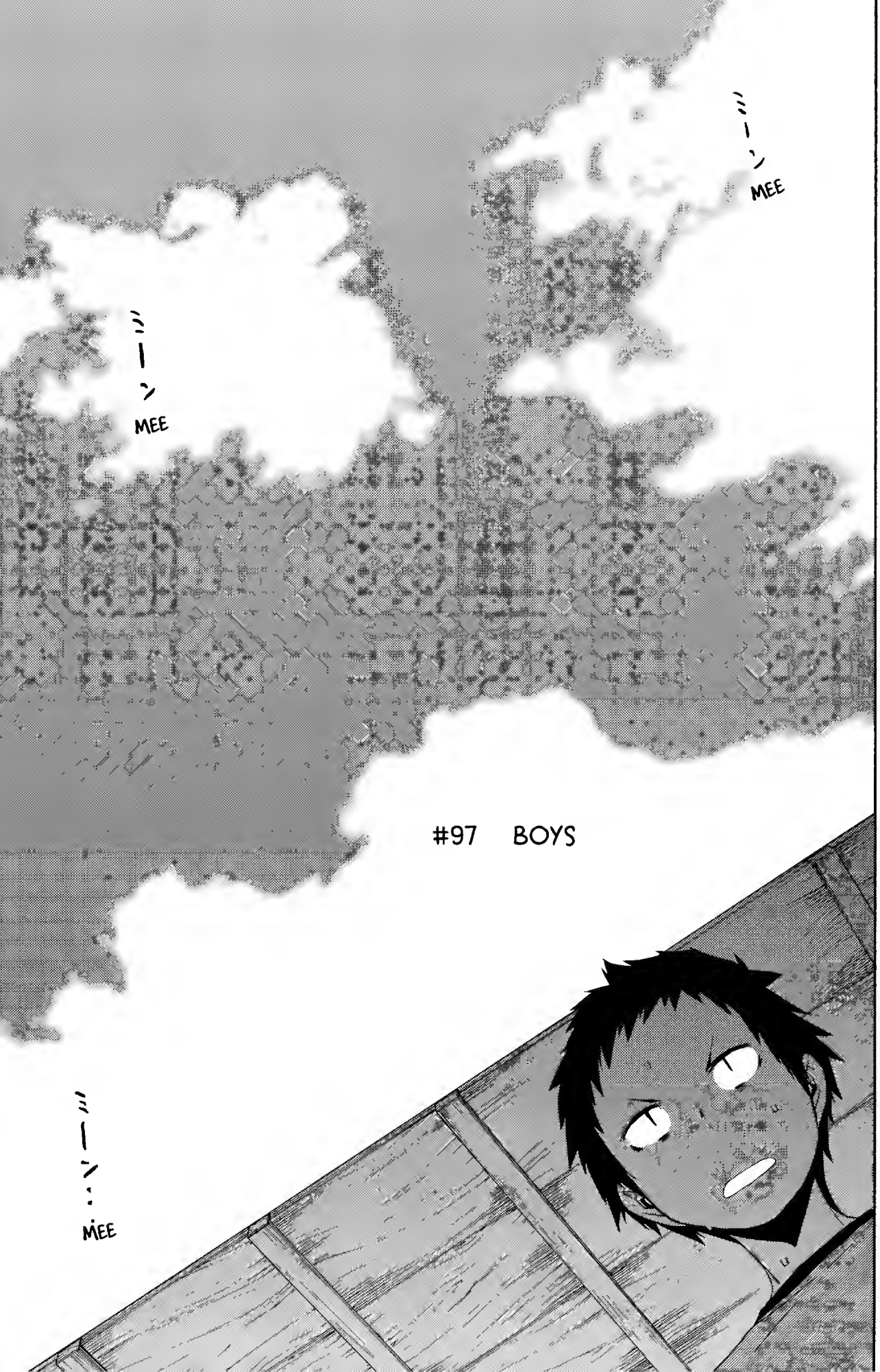
HOW CARE-LESS.
MEE
MEE


MEE
MEE


MEEEE
MEE
MEE

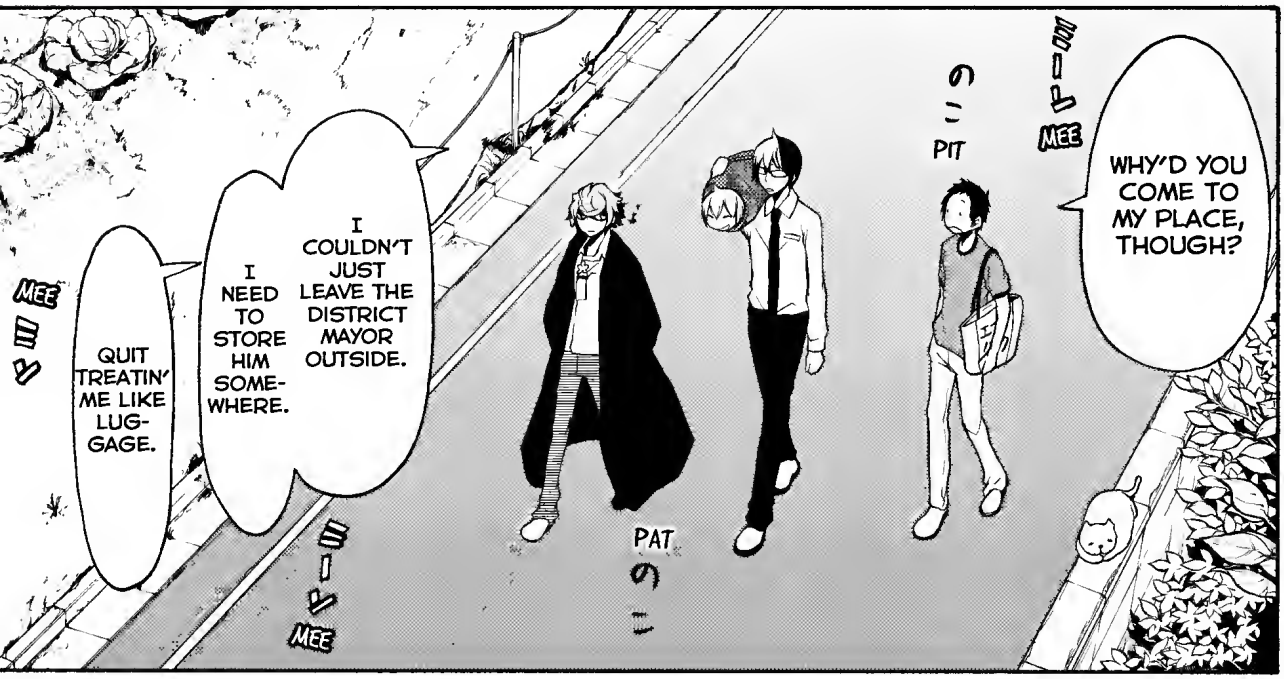
SNORE
GRUM GRUM
フガフガ
FOR SOMEONE WHO LIVES ALONE, THE PLACE SURE IS TIDY.
MUST BE IN HIS NATURE.
AKI-NA...
CLEAN UP A LITTLE, WILL YA?
MMM... I'LL DO IT LATER, GRANDPA!
IT'S GREAT THAT HE'S SO ENERGETIC.
SHEESH.
I JUST WISH HE'D BE A LITTLE LESS SLOPPY ...

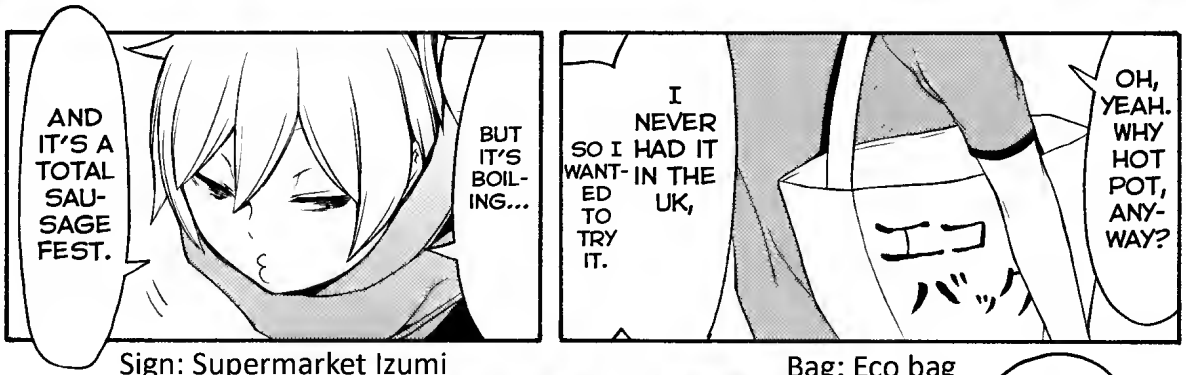
じー…
STARE
MMM…
HEL-LO.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I CAME OVER FOR LUNCH.
MEE
MEE
MURA-SAKI?!
MEEEE
WHOA!
WHA?
HUH?!
HOT POT…
…PLEASE.
OH, YEAH.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO EAT?
MEE
I MIGHT AS WELL MAKE YOU SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER HAD BEFORE WHILE WE'RE AT IT.
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE



#97 BOYS

WELL, A PROMISE IS A PROMISE.
ALL RIGHT, I GOT IT...
YOU KNOW...
JAPANESE HOT POT...
I MUST SAY, YOU'RE RATHER NEGLIGENT.
WELL... I WAS JUST HANGING OUT, SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST DAY OFF I'VE HAD IN A WHILE.
WEEEN
SHALL I FIX IT FOR YOU? IT CAN'T BE THAT COMPLICATED OF A MACHINE.
REALLY?
HM.
BEEP
BEEP
I COULDN'T FIX IT AND JUST KINDA DOZED OFF...
THEN MY AC BROKE.
DING DONG
ピンポン
THAT'D BE AWESOME...

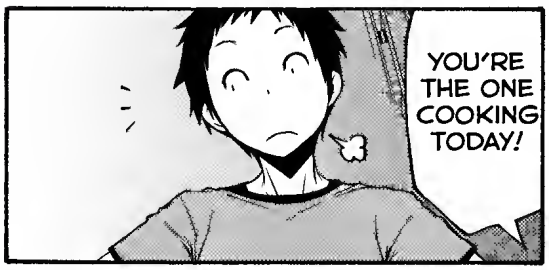




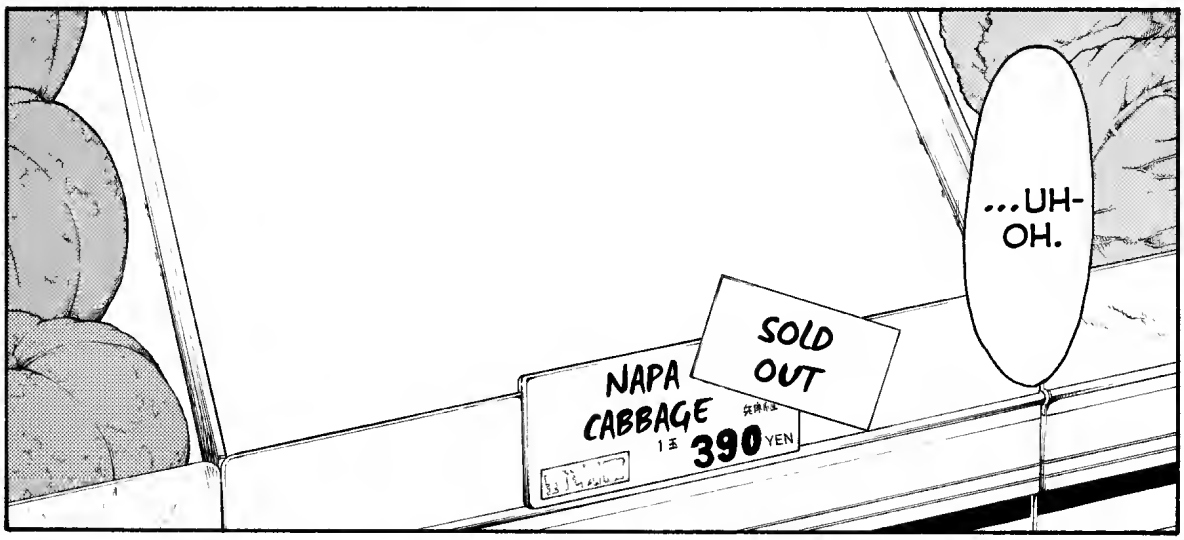
Bag: Eco bag

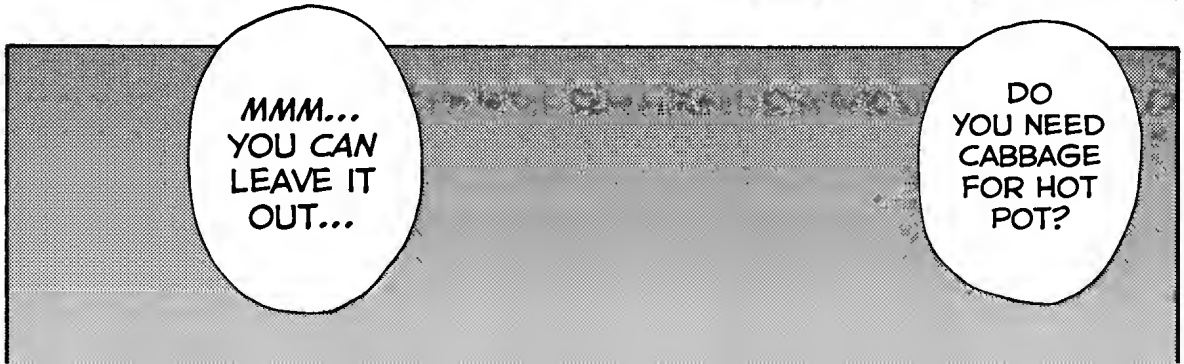
Sign: Supermarket Izumi

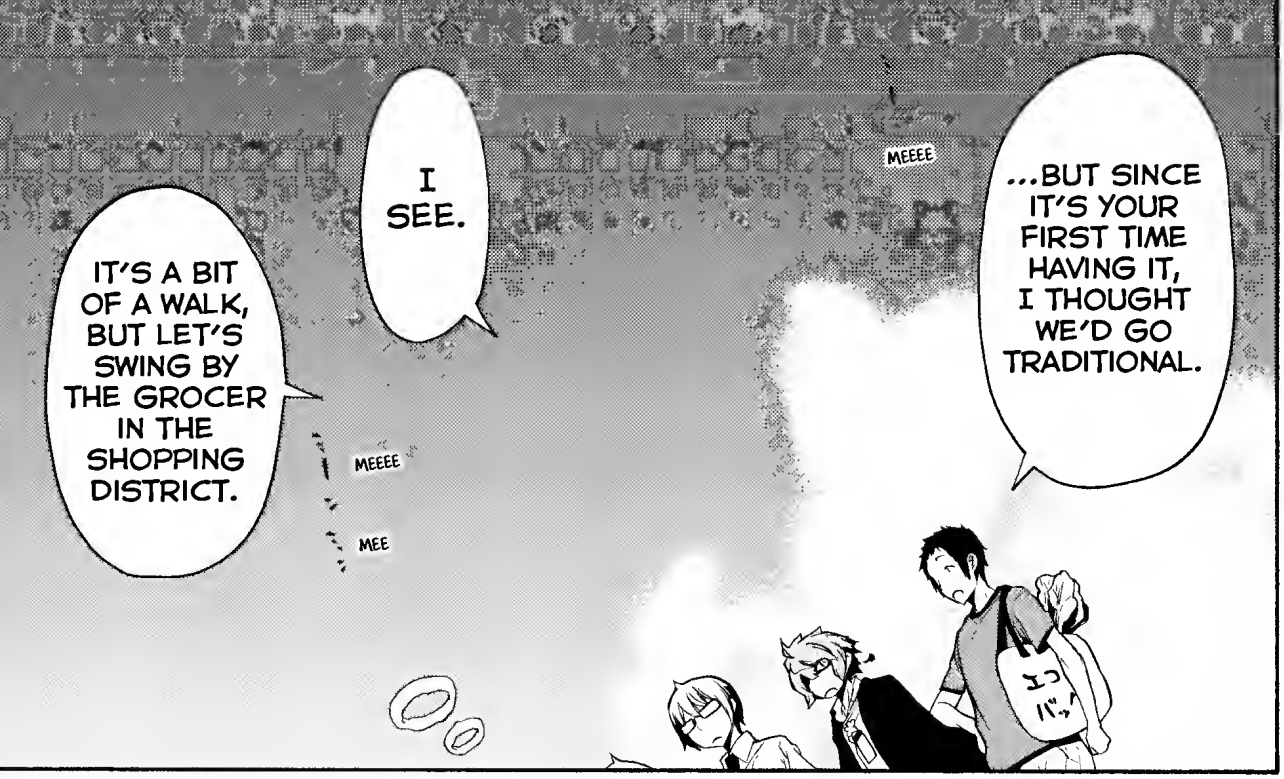
NOOO, THANK YOU!
WE'RE HAVING A GIRLS' NIGHT, YOU'RE HAVING A BOYS' NIGHT.
LET'S LEAVE IT AT THAT TODAY!


YOU'RE THE ONE COOKING TODAY!

WHAAAT? I WANNA EAT AKINA-SAN'S COOKING!
すろっ
ZRR
ALL RIGHT, MOVE OUT! SEE YA!

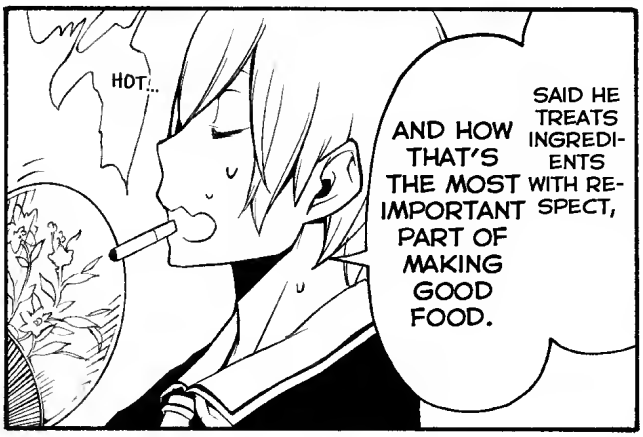

...UH-OH.
SOLD OUT
NAPA CABBAGE
1玉
390 YEN


DO YOU NEED CABBAGE FOR HOT POT?
MMM... YOU CAN LEAVE IT OUT...


...BUT SINCE IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME HAVING IT, I THOUGHT WE'D GO TRADITIONAL.
MEEEE
I SEE.
IT'S A BIT OF A WALK, BUT LET'S SWING BY THE GROCER IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT.
MEEEE
MEE

MIGHT AS WELL DO IT RIGHT.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO.
OH, CRAP. I MUST BE SPACING OUT IN THIS HEAT.

WAIT.
WE FORGOT THE GREEN ONION, TOO.
I USUALLY BUY PRODUCE THERE, ANYWAY.


HOT...
AND HOW THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF MAKING GOOD FOOD.
SAID HE TREATS INGREDIENTS WITH RESPECT,

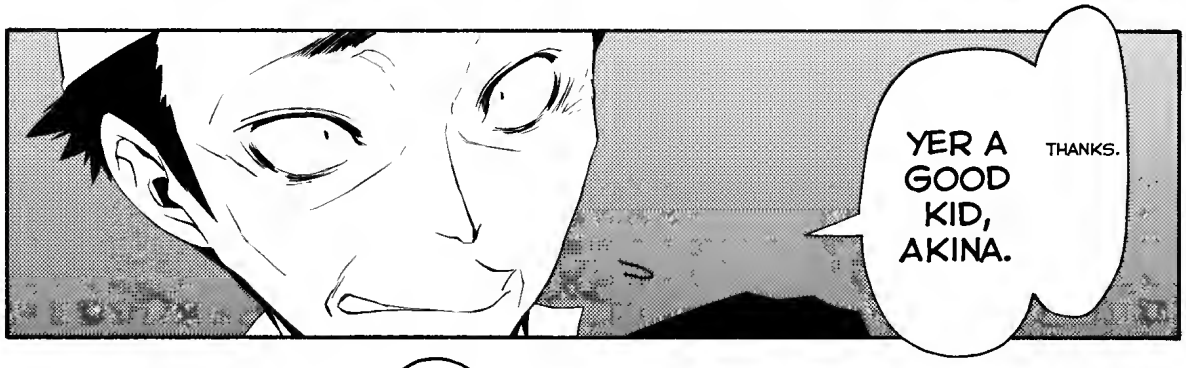
YUP. MARIABELL THOUGHT SO, TOO.
HE ALWAYS HAS BEEN.
IS HE THAT GOOD OF A COOK?

FYOOO
WELL, THAT'S JUST HOW...

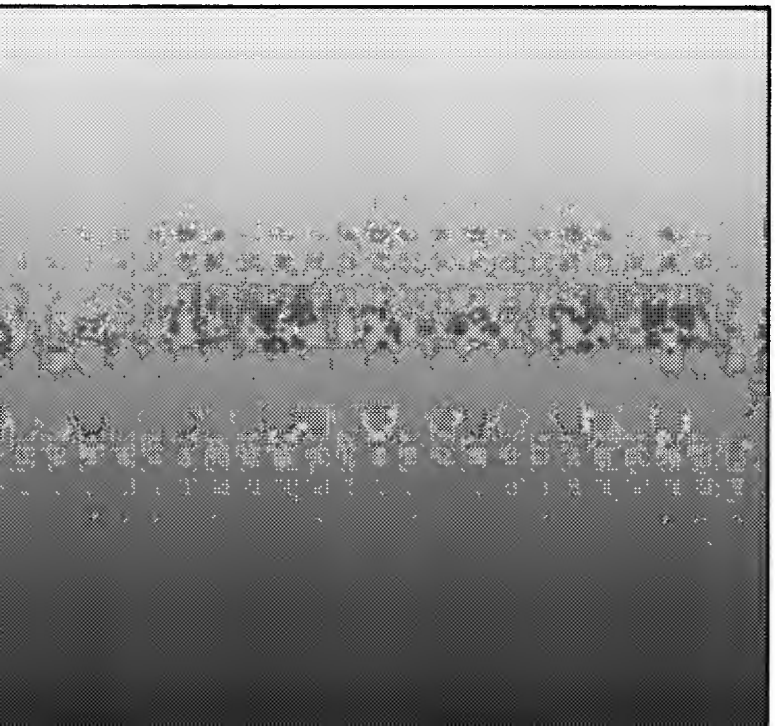
AKINA!
BOING
ぼよん
THANKS FOR THE FOOD!
ぽちん
CLACK
I'M GONNA CATCH A STAG BEETLE!
AKINA, YOU LEFT SOME RICE GRAINS!
YOU CAN EAT 'EM, GRAND-PA!
TAP
I SWEAR, THAT BOY...

AKINA-SAN!
...SAN.
AKINA-SAAAN!
OOP, HE CAME TO.
I'M FINE, ALL GOOD.
DID SOME-THING FALL ON ME?
SIT
SIT-TING ON THEIR KNEES
I'M SO SOR-RY!
I WAS SPAR-RING WITH IRUKA-SAN, AND SHE SENT ME FLY-ING...
AAAH!
I'M SOR-RY...
TALK ABOUT OVER-DOING IT.
I'M PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY PUNISH-MENT...
GROPE
GROPE
GREAT! THAT'S AN ADMIRABLE MENTALITY.
SHOULD I CUT HER?
GO AHEAD.

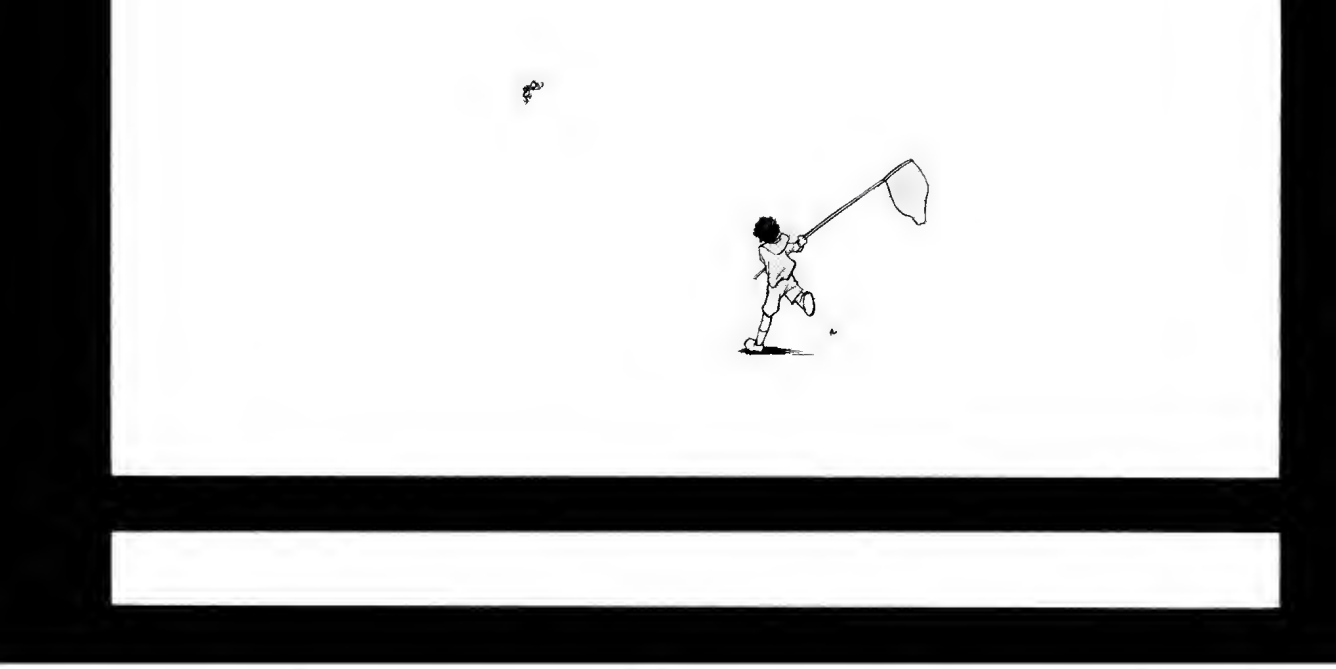
WELL, GLAD YER ALL RIGHT.
WHAT A SORRY SIGHT.
AH, YER UP.
SKF
OLD MAN JIN-ROKU, DIDN'T YOU THROW OUT YOUR BACK LAST WEEK?
YEAH, AND IT STILL SMARTS ...
OW, OW ...
NO PROB-LEM.
THANKS FOR LETTING US BOR-ROW THE SHADE!
AAH, GOOD POINT ...
I WANTED TO HARVEST ALL THESE TODAY BEFORE THEY SHRIVEL UP IN THIS HEAT.
M'KAY.
FLAP

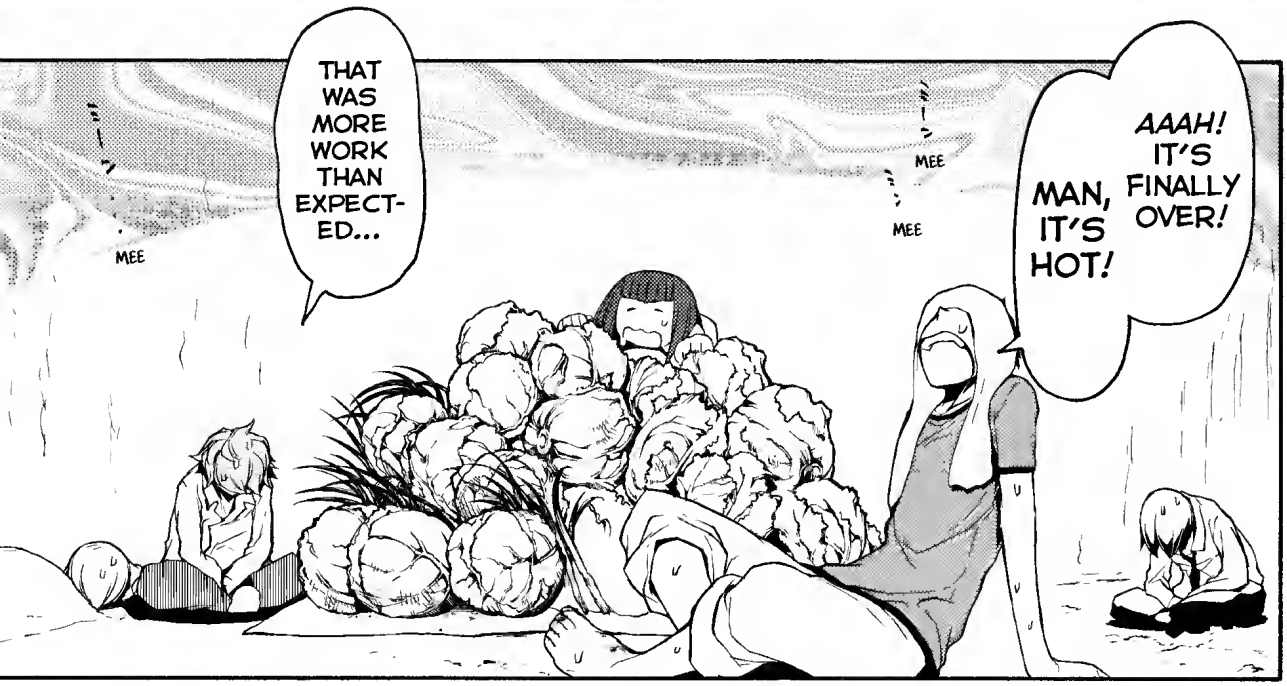


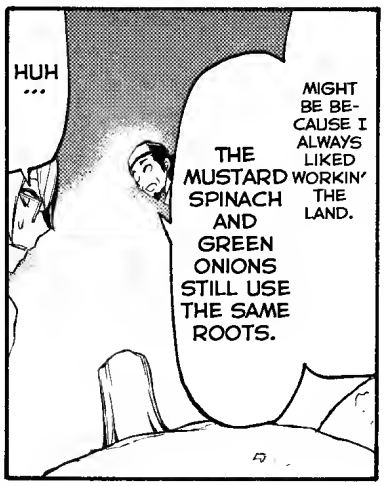
Golem: Monkey

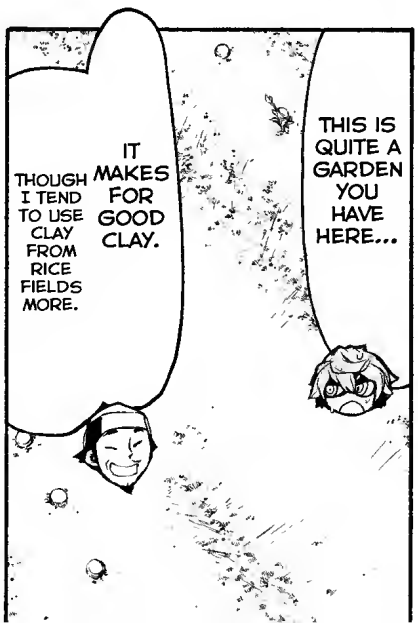


た
TAP
た
TAP
た
TAP
IT'S A MIYA-MA!
た
TAP
...




MEE
MEE
MEE
THAT WAS MORE WORK THAN EXPECT-ED...
AAAH! IT'S FINALLY OVER!
MAN, IT'S HOT!

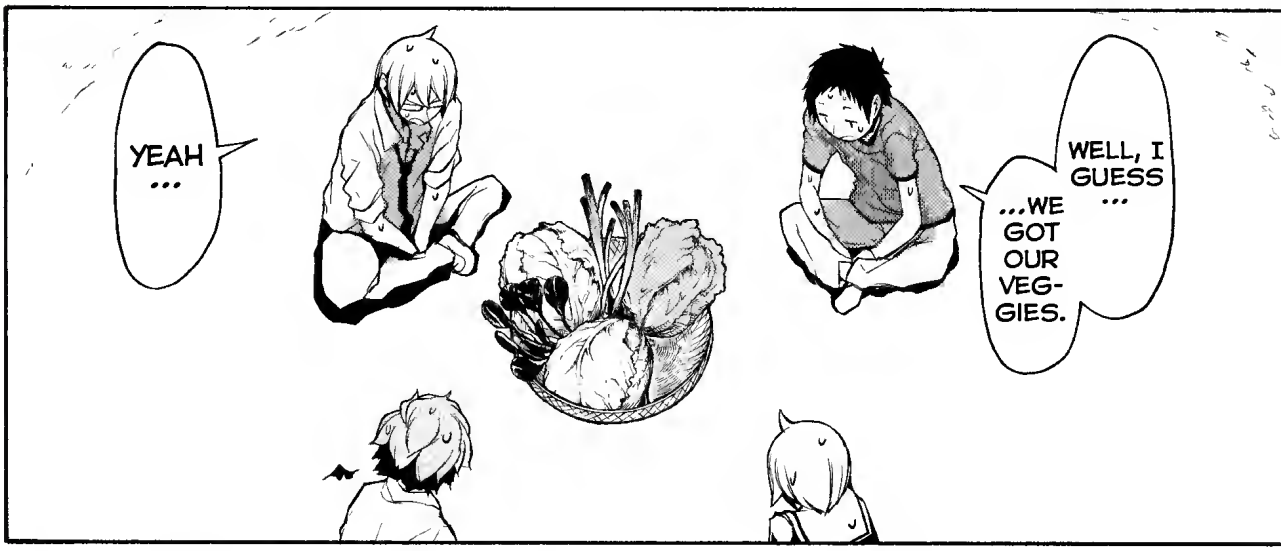

HUH ...
THE MUSTARD SPINACH AND GREEN ONIONS STILL USE THE SAME ROOTS.
MIGHT BE BE-CAUSE I ALWAYS LIKED WORKIN' THE LAND.

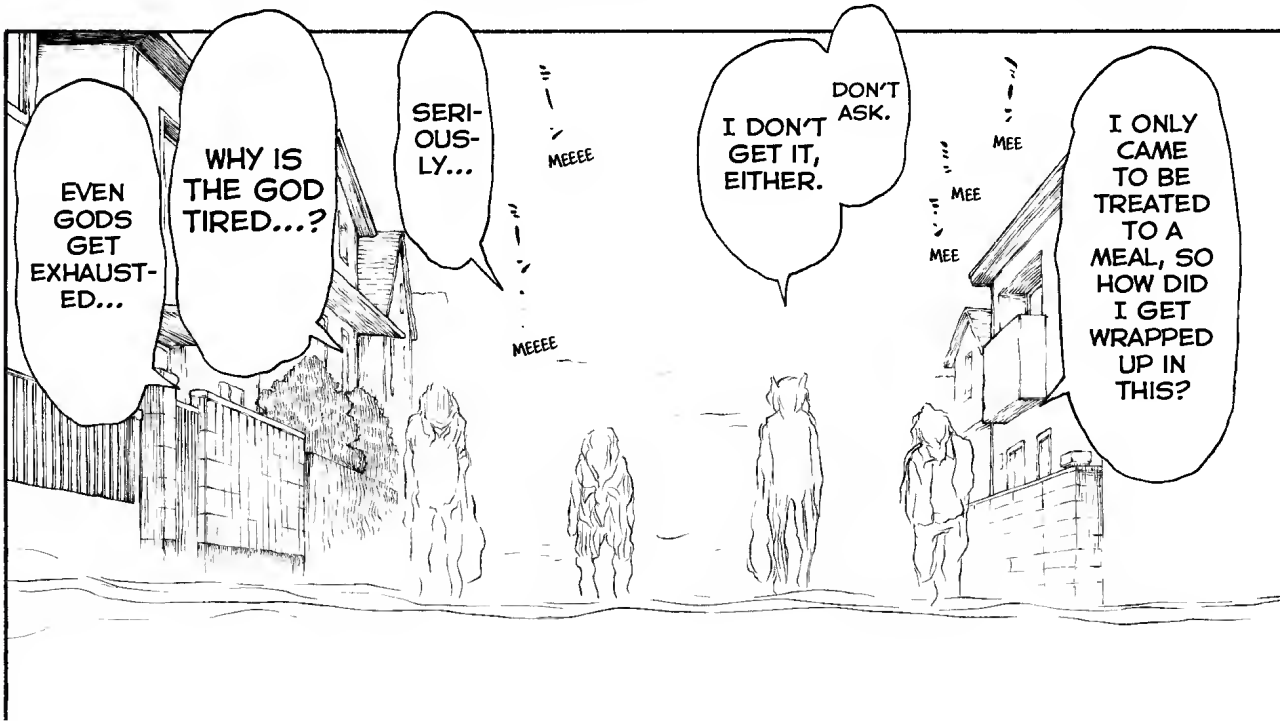

THIS IS QUITE A GARDEN YOU HAVE HERE...
IT MAKES FOR GOOD CLAY.
THOUGH I TEND TO USE CLAY FROM RICE FIELDS MORE.

I'M GOING TO GO HOME AND TAKE A SHOW-ER.
OKAY. THANKS AGAIN!

THANKS!
HERE, TAKE THESE.
FWUMP

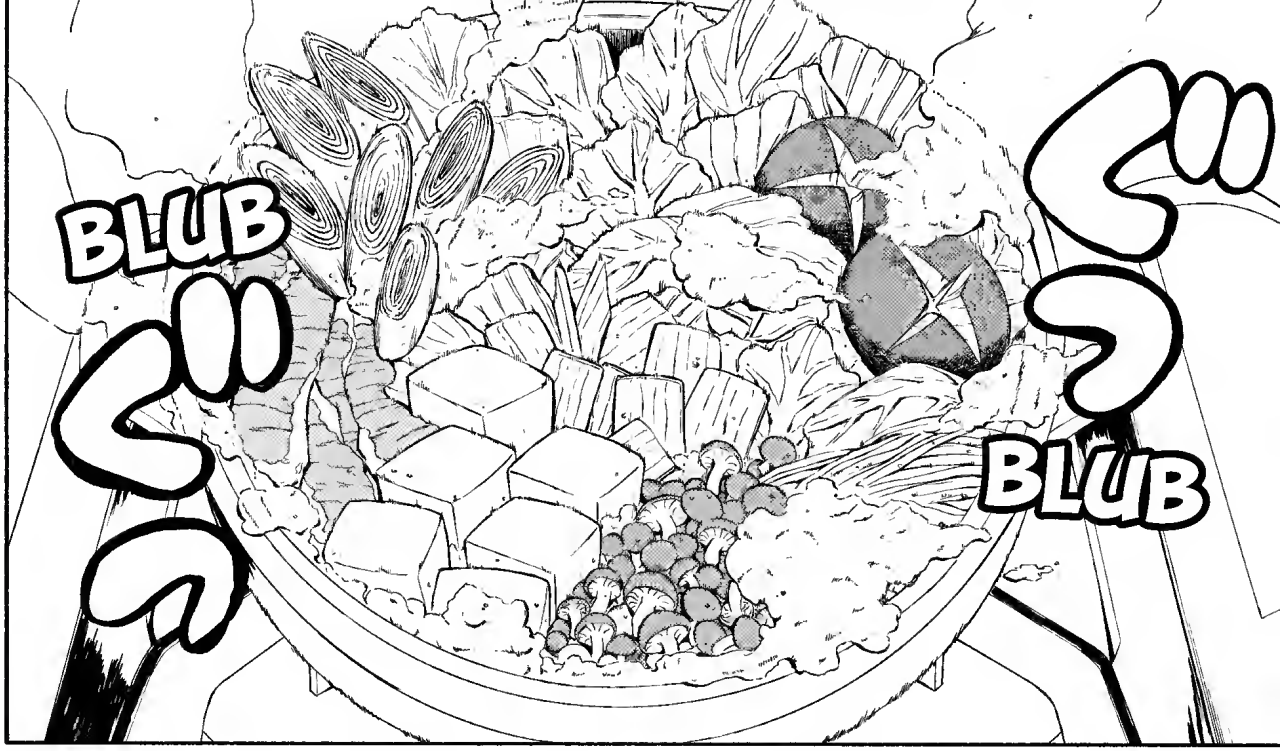
LET'S SEE ...
AS LONG AS THE ROOTS ARE INTACT.
THEY KEEP GROWING BACK, RIGHT?

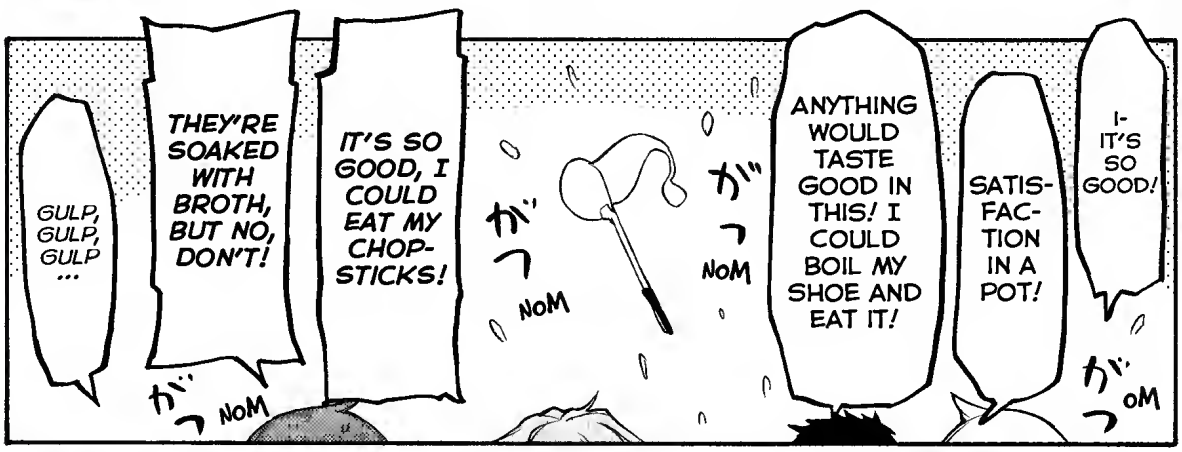

YEAH ...
WELL, I GUESS ...
...WE GOT OUR VEGGIES.


EVEN GODS GET EXHAUSTED...
WHY IS THE GOD TIRED...?
SERIOUSLY...
MEEEE
MEEEE
I DON'T GET IT, EITHER.
DON'T ASK.
MEE
MEE
MEE
I ONLY CAME TO BE TREATED TO A MEAL, SO HOW DID I GET WRAPPED UP IN THIS?

AFTER ALL THIS WORK, I'M SURE ...
...THIS HOT POT WILL TASTE EXQUISITE.
YOU BET YOUR ASS.
THEY SAY HUNGER IS THE BEST SPICE.
WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, AKINA ...
LEAVE IT TO ME.
I FEEL LIKE I CAN MAKE A SATISFYING DISH NOW...

OOOH ...
かぽっ
POP


BLUB
BLUB


GULP, GULP, GULP...
THEY'RE SOAKED WITH BROTH, BUT NO, DON'T!
IT'S SO GOOD, I COULD EAT MY CHOP-STICKS!
ANYTHING WOULD TASTE GOOD IN THIS! I COULD BOIL MY SHOE AND EAT IT!
SATIS-FAC-TION IN A POT!
I-IT'S SO GOOD!
NOM
NOM
NOM
NOM

GULP
GULP
GULP
BEER
THERE, THERE. DRINK UP!
HEY, YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

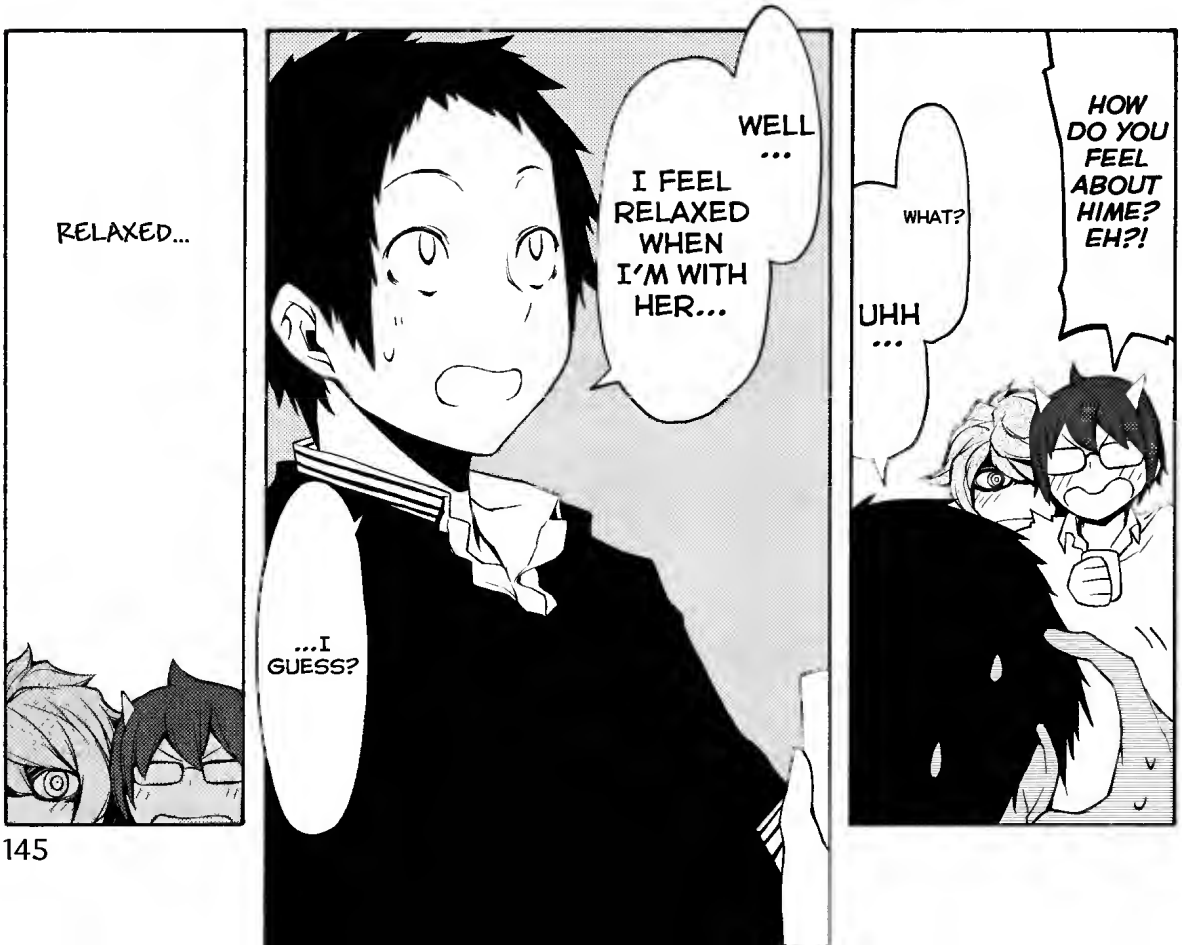
DON'T CRY!
HNGH...
IT'S SO GOOD.
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT.

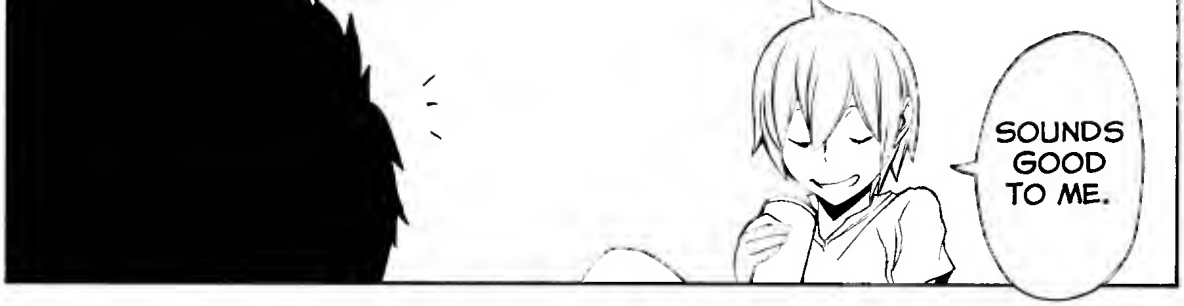
AHHH
THAT HITS THE SPOT!
WHEN DID YOU BUY BEER?!

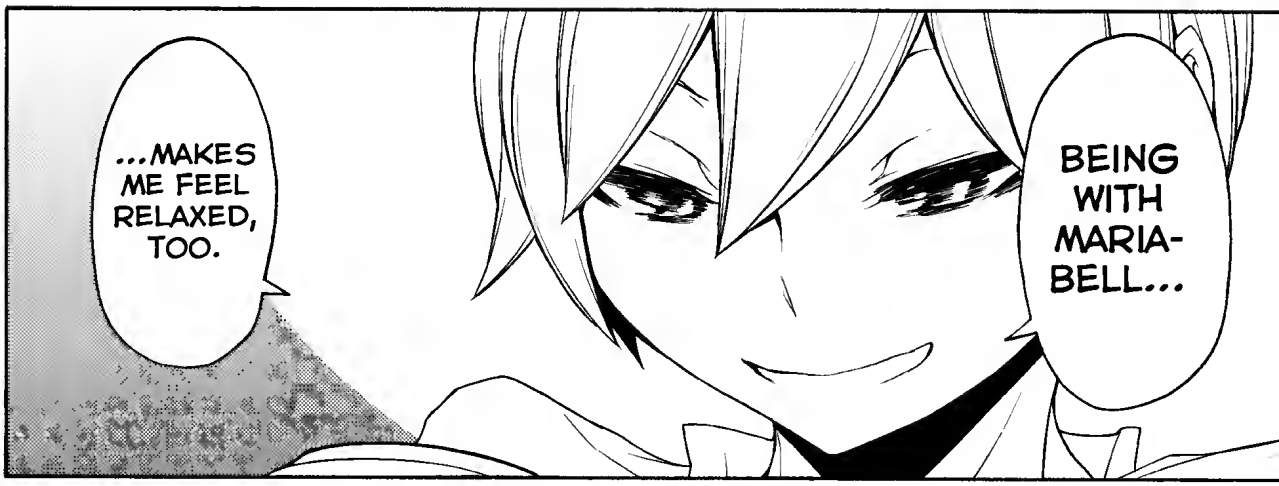
OH, RIGHT. YOU GET DRUNK OFF SODA!
THAZ RIGHT! THIS IS JAPAN!
YOU'RE ALREADY HAM-MERED!
CHILDREN IN THE UK ARE ALLOWED TO DRINK AT HOME PAST THE AGE OF FIVE, THERE-FORE, I'M USED TO DRINKING.

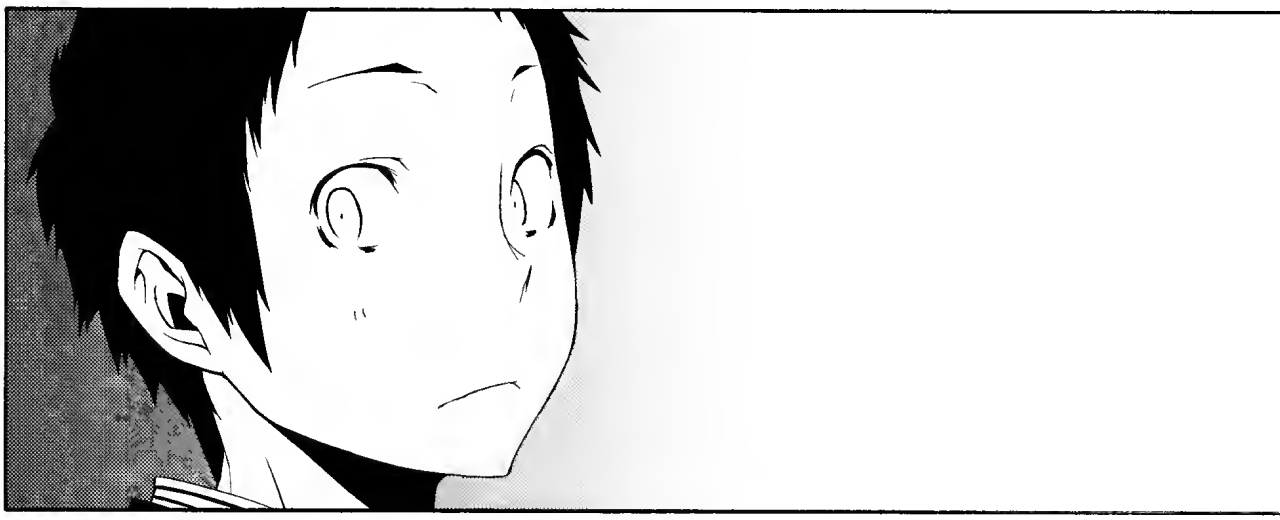
Can: Soda

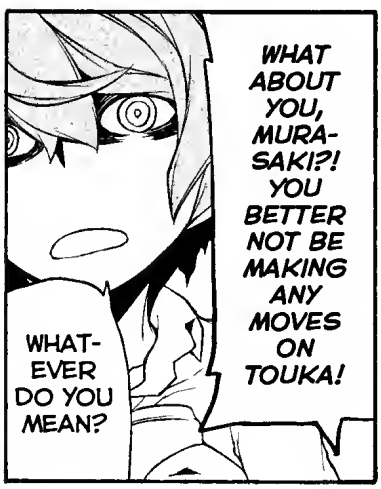
WELL?
WELL? WELL ?!
RABBLE わい
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU TURNED OFF SECRETARY MODE, HUH?
WITH HIME!
RABBLE わい
WITH WHAT?
SO, HOW'RE THINGS LATELY, AKINA?!


RELAXED...
...I GUESS?
WELL ... I FEEL RELAXED WHEN I'M WITH HER...
WHAT?
UHH ...
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HIME? EH?!

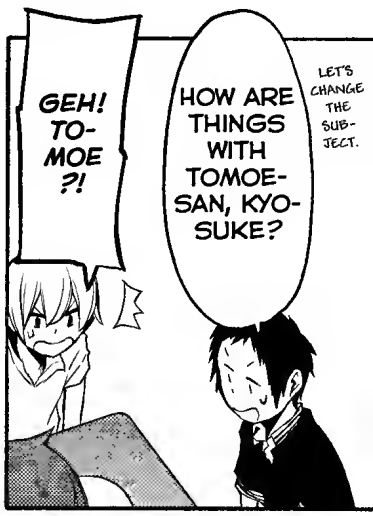

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.

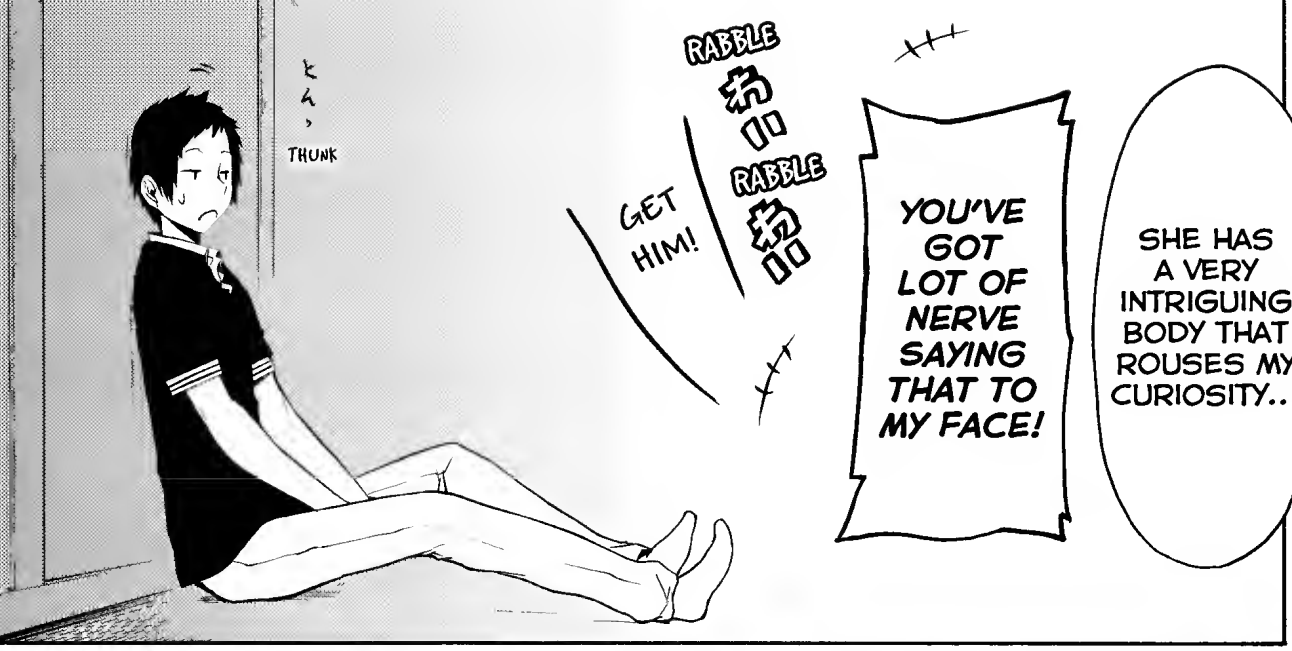

BEING WITH MARIA-BELL...
...MAKES ME FEEL RELAXED, TOO.




WHAT ABOUT YOU, MURA-SAKI?! YOU BETTER NOT BE MAKING ANY MOVES ON TOUKA!
WHAT-EVER DO YOU MEAN?

STAY AWAY FROM HER! SHE'S SCARY AS HELL!
SNIFF... SHE SAID SHE'S GOING TO BE BUSY, SO SHE WON'T HAVE TIME TO TEXT FOR A WHILE...
SOUNDS ROUGH...


GEH! TO-MOE ?!
HOW ARE THINGS WITH TOMOE-SAN, KYO-SUKE?
LET'S CHANGE THE SUB-JECT.


SHE HAS A VERY INTRIGUING BODY THAT ROUSES MY CURIOSITY...
YOU'VE GOT LOT OF NERVE SAYING THAT TO MY FACE!
RABBLE
わいわい
RABBLE
わいわい
GET HIM!
とん
THUNK

すー…
SNORE

TAP
たた
TAP
たっ

I CAN'T... GO ON...
GRR
GRR
GRR
GRR

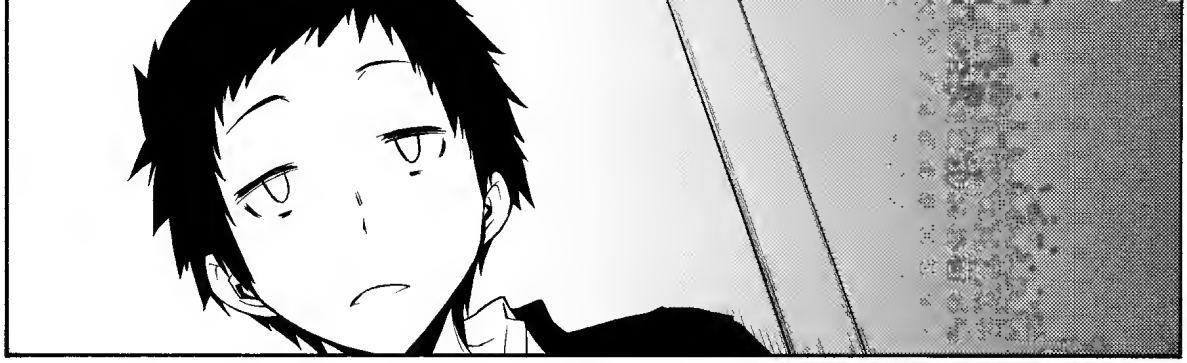
A-AKI-NA...
ON THREE! ONE, TWO...
!
GRAB
THANKS, AKINA...
NO PROBLEM. I ACTUALLY SAW YOU EARLIER BUT KEPT WALKING.
SOR-RY!
SO WHENEVER YOU NEED ME, JUST CALL!
BUT I PROMISE THAT I'LL COME HELP YOU WHENEVER YOU'RE IN TROUBLE!
I'M REALLY SORRY.
SNIFF
OH ...
OKAY.
THANKS, AKINA.
I LOVE YOU!

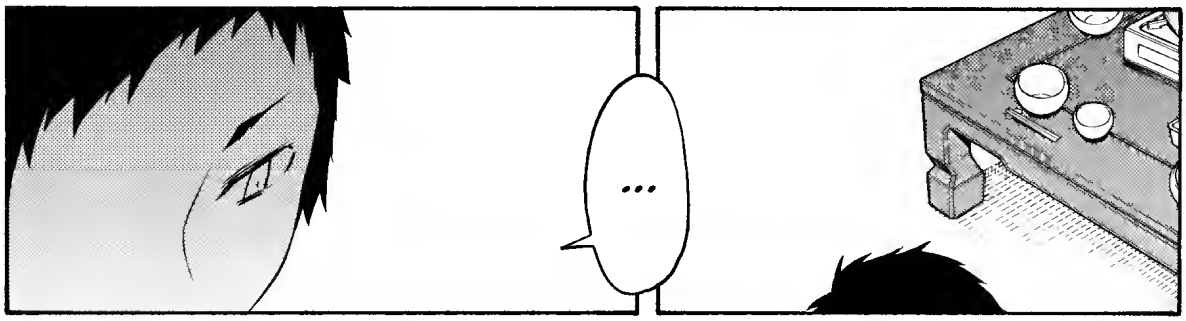
THANKS A LOT ...
YOU WERE RIGHT. I'M GLAD I WENT BACK.
HEEEY!
TAP
TAP
TAP
...GIN!
I SEE.
THAT'S GOOD.
HEY, AKI-NA.
WHY DON'T YOU CLEAN UP YOUR ROOM?
MMM... TOO MUCH WORK.

*A type of Japanese board game similar to Snakes and Ladders

IT'S GOOD SHE WAS HAPPY, HUH, AKINA?
YEAH.
BUT Y'KNOW ...
ALL THIS TIME ...
...I'VE EATEN LIKE A PIG AND LEFT SO MUCH FOOD BEHIND.
LIKE YOU SAID, ANIMALS GIVE THEIR LIVES SO WE CAN EAT,
BUT I...
ALL THIS TIME, I...
MRR... むぅ...
AAH! AKINA'S CRYING!
N-NO, I'M NOT!

...YEAH.
WHAT'D I TELL YOU?
HE'S A GOOD KID AT HEART.
AS LONG AS THE ROOTS ARE FIRM, EVERY-THING'LL BE FINE.
BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ANYTHING I SAID.
RAIS-ING KIDS SURE IS HARD.
EVEN THOUGH HE'S MY GRAND-KID.
YOU DUMBASS. WHO'D LISTEN TO ANYTHING US FOGIES SAY?
THE WORDS OF FRIENDS HIT HARDER THAN THE BABBLINGS OF OLD MEN.
THAT GOES FOR GOOD THINGS AND BAD.
LITTLE AKINA'S BEEN BLESSED WITH GOOD FRIENDS.
...YEAH.
BUT I GOTTA SAY, HE'S JUST LIKE YOU WHEN YOU WERE A KID.
DROP IT...



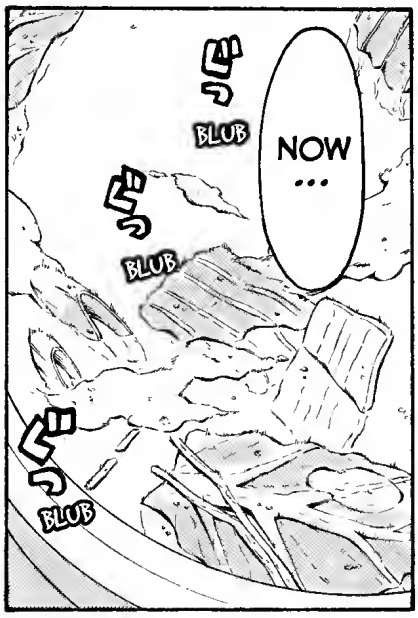

...

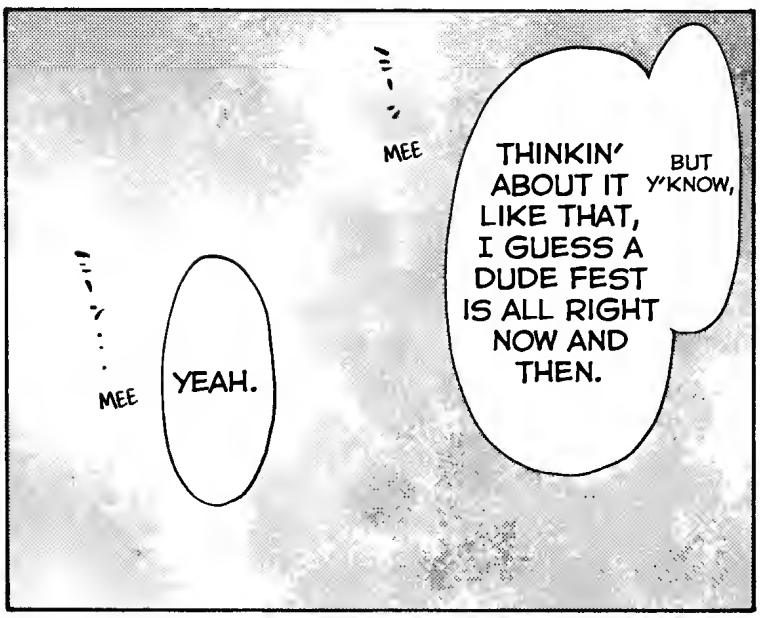
SINCE OLDEN TIMES,
NABE HAS BEEN SOME-THIN'...

...YOU GATHER 'ROUND WITH A BUNCH OF LIKE-MINDED FOLKS,
YUCK-ING IT UP, EATIN', ENJO-YIN'.
THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO EAT IT.
ALWAYS HAS BEEN.

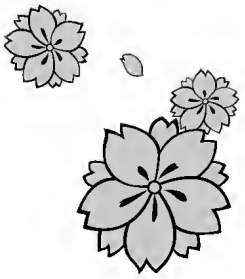
...NO ONE COULD BLAME YOU.
AND YOU GO AND MAKE A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR THE FRIENDS YOU WISH WERE HERE NOW, BUT AREN'T...
SO, IF THE SUMMER HEAT GETS TO YOUR HEAD,
BUT ...
YOU'RE RIGHT. HE'S NOT HERE NOW ...
I'M LOOKIN' FORWARD TO DRINK-ING WITH YOU GUYS.
WELL, GIVE IT YOUR ALL.
GULP
BUT ...
NOT A BAD DEAL, RIGHT?
THAT'S MY PRIVILEGE OF LIVING IN THIS TOWN FOR HUN-DREDS OF YEARS.
BEFORE I KNOW IT, I'M THROWING THEM BACK WITH PEO-PLE WHO I COULD'VE SWORN WERE BABIES A MINUTE AGO.

...GOT IT.


BLUB
BLUB
BLUB
NOW ...


MEE
THINKIN' ABOUT IT LIKE THAT, I GUESS A DUDE FEST IS ALL RIGHT NOW AND THEN.
BUT Y'KNOW,
MEE
YEAH.

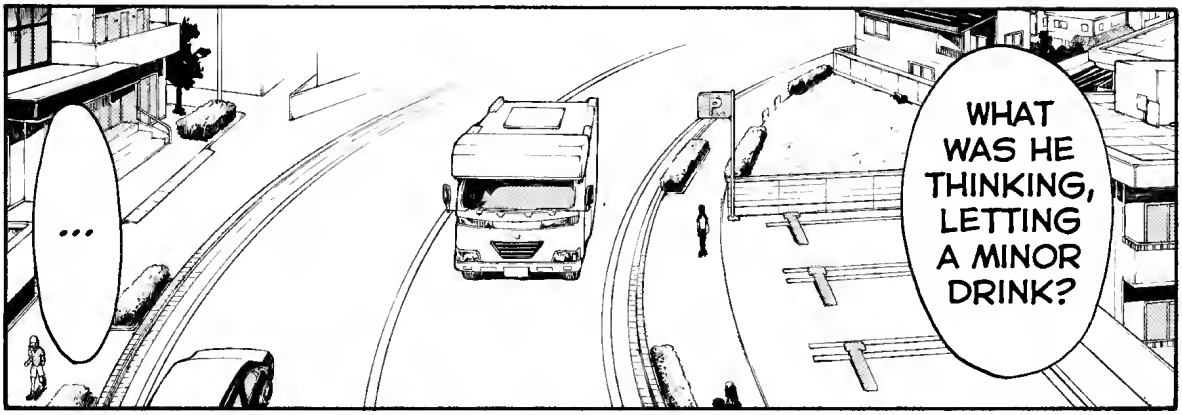
MEE
BLUB
MEE
BLUB
BLUB
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE THE AC ON?
BLUB
MEE
BLUB
I SHOULD'VE HAD MURA-SAKI FIX IT BEFORE HE GOT DRUNK...
...IF ONLY WE COULD DO SOME-THIN' ABOUT THIS HEAT.



DRINKING IS FOR 21+ ONLY!

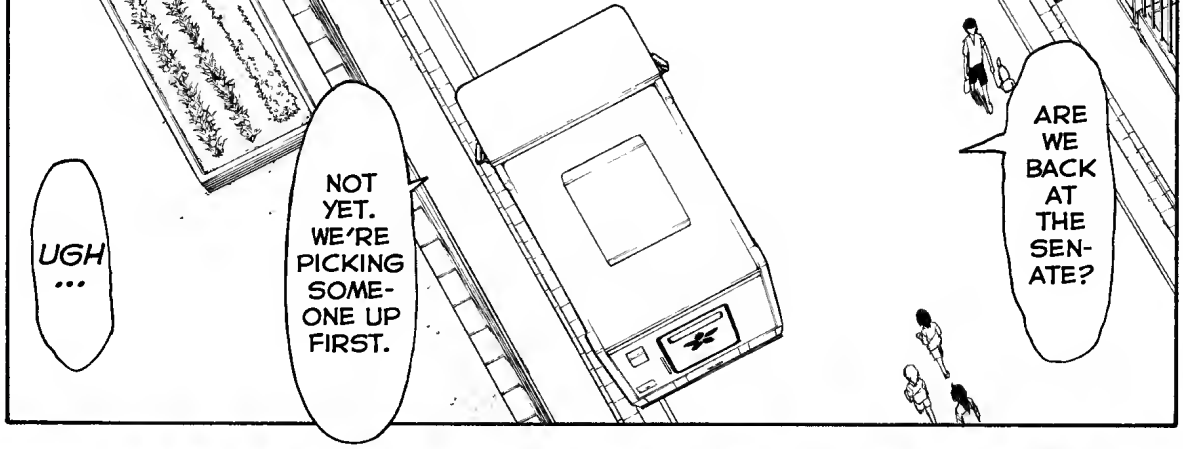
元 老 院
VRR
I SWEAR ...

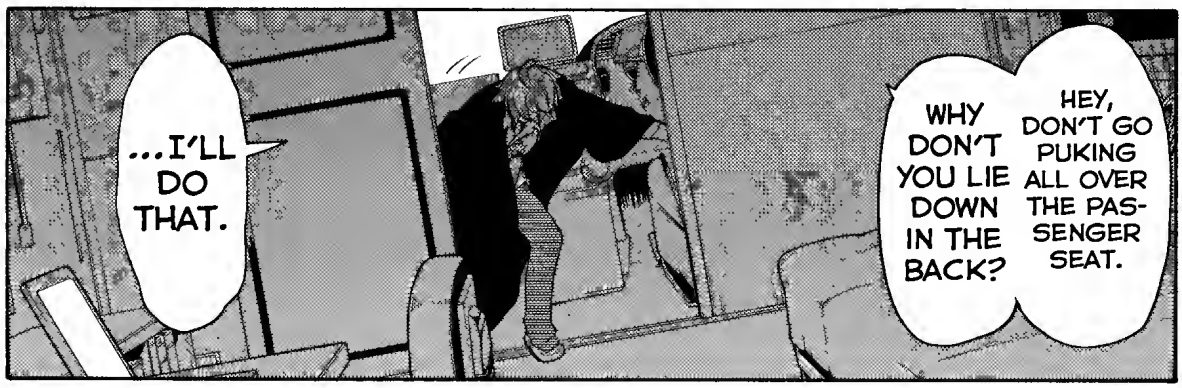
Van: Senate

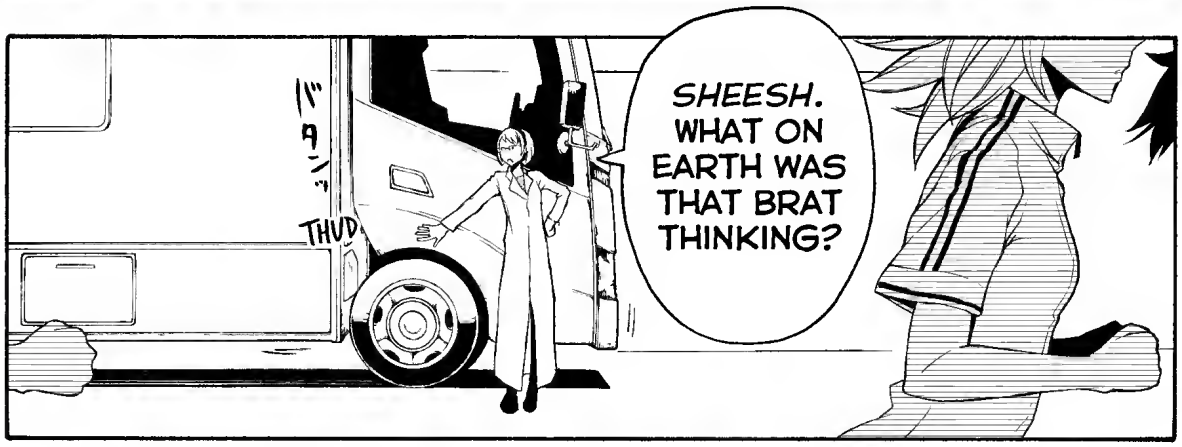

...
WHAT WAS HE THINKING, LETTING A MINOR DRINK?

MY HEAD IS POUND-ING...
SORRY, CAN YOU KEEP IT DOWN, SHIINA-SAN?

OOP. HERE WE ARE.
AND WHOSE FAULT DO YOU THINK THAT IS?
SKREE
KA-THUNK


ARE WE BACK AT THE SEN-ATE?
NOT YET. WE'RE PICKING SOME-ONE UP FIRST.
UGH ...


HEY, DON'T GO PUKING ALL OVER THE PAS-SENGER SEAT.
WHY DON'T YOU LIE DOWN IN THE BACK?
...I'LL DO THAT.

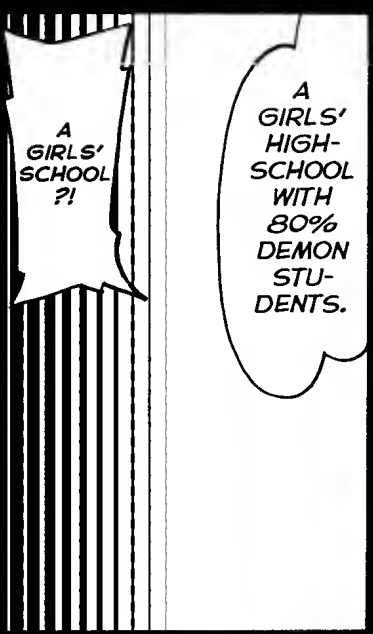

SHEESH. WHAT ON EARTH WAS THAT BRAT THINKING?
THUD

DOES HE HAVE ANY IDEA...
...WHAT DAY IT IS?

THIS IS THE LAST DAY MEMBERS OF THE SENATE...
#98 PLEDGE FLOWER
...GET TO GO OUTSIDE.

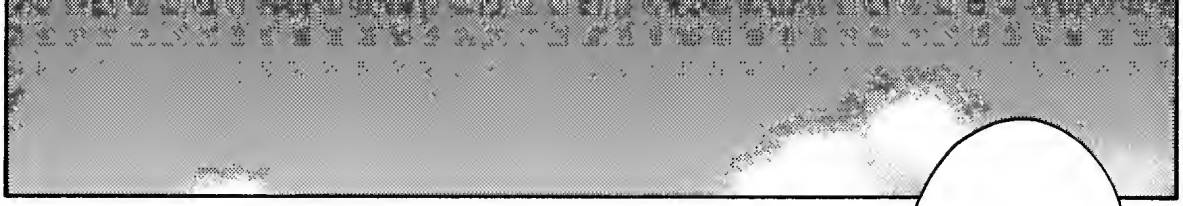
UZU, YOU HAVE A TEACHING LICENSE, DON'T YOU?
START TEACHING AT A SCHOOL IN SAKURASHIN FROM NEXT MONTH ON.

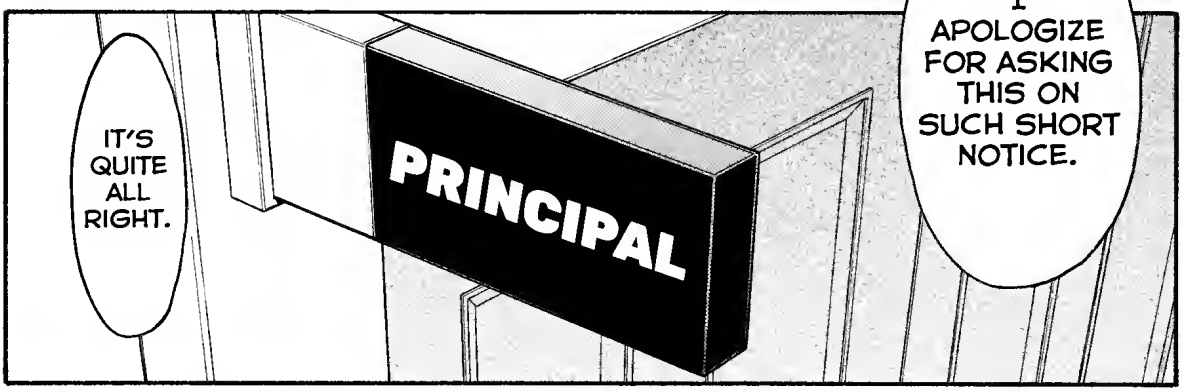
...HUH?

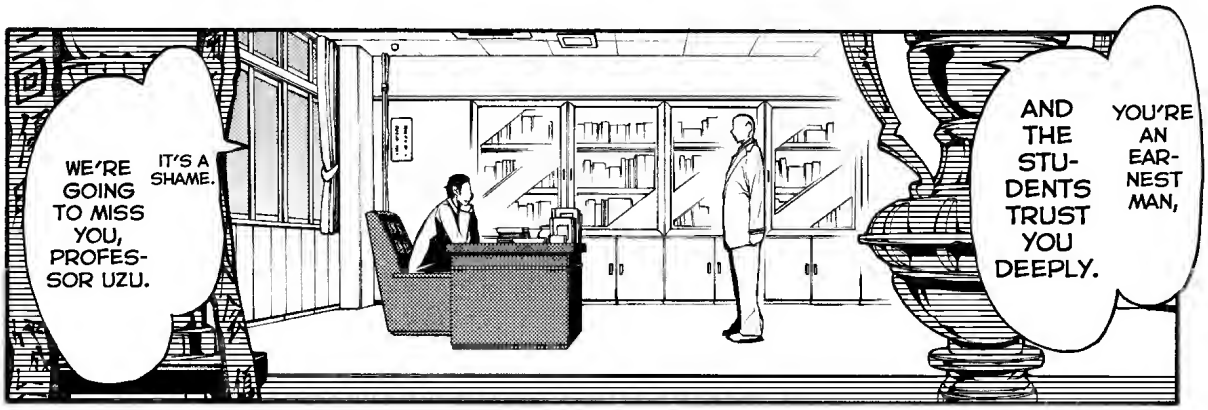

A GIRLS' SCHOOL?!
A GIRLS' HIGH-SCHOOL WITH 80% DEMON STU-DENTS.

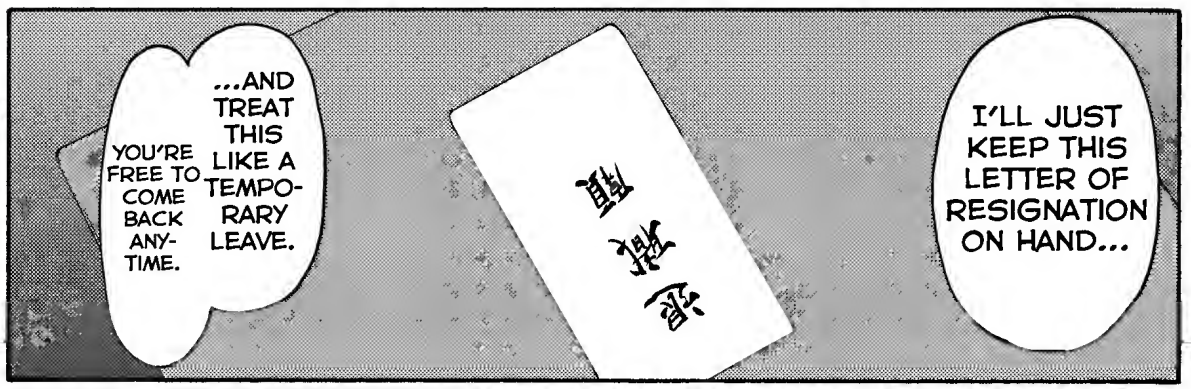
SOME-WHERE WITH PLENTY OF DEMONS WOULD BE GOOD. AHA. HERE.
PLUS, SOMEONE NEEDS TO KEEP AN EYE ON THOSE KIDS.
WHO BETTER THAN A TEACH-ER?
TAK
カ
カ
TAK

ERR... WHAT?
THE SENATE IS GOING TO START SENDING PEOPLE TO DO DEMON EXAMINA-TIONS IN SAKURA-SHIN.
IT'LL BE EASIER TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU IF YOU'RE STATIONED THERE, RIGHT?
SLIDE
カ"

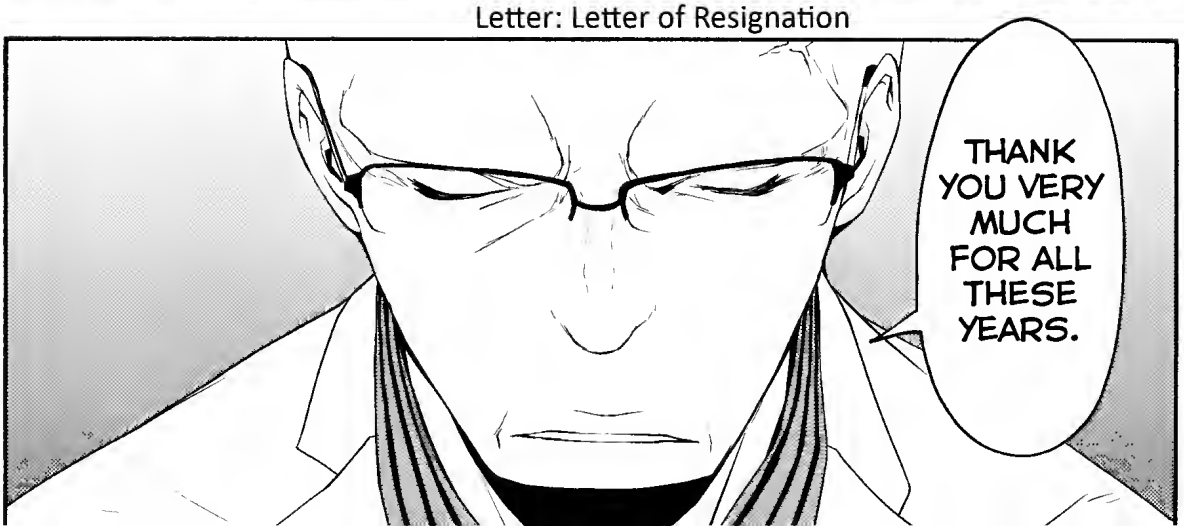








Letter: Letter of Resignation



HEY.

PASS IT HERE!
WOO!

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, BUT IT WENT BY IN A FLASH.
SINCE YOU STARTED TEACH-ING?
YES.

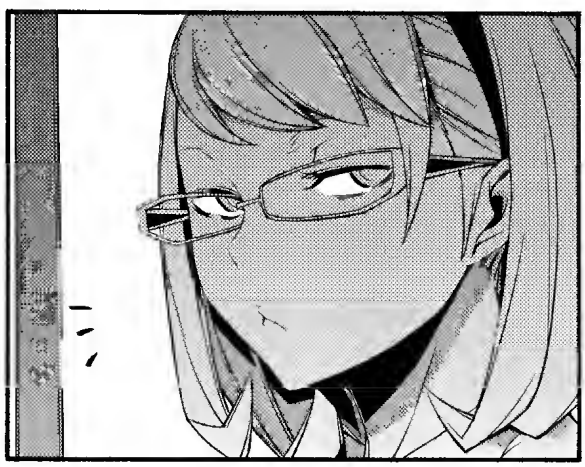
...
AT FIRST, IT WAS TO MONITOR THE TOWN,
BUT OVER TIME, THE JOY OF TEACHING GAVE ME A SENSE OF FULFILLMENT.
I WOULD BE LYING IF I SAID I HAVE NO REGRETS.
PROFESSOR UZU! YOU'RE WORKING, EVEN THOUGH IT'S SUMMER?
YES.
I SEE YOU'RE ALL WORKING HARD.
BE SURE TO STAY HYDRATED.
THIS IS MY LAST INSPECTION.
WALK WITH ME, WON'T YOU?
SKRIT
SKRIT
...ALL RIGHT.
I CAN'T LET MYSELF GET SENTIMENTAL.
THIS IS THE LAST DAY THE SENATE IS ALLOWING US TO GO OUTSIDE.
I MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE IN GOOD ORDER.

LUCY IS CALLING FOR YOU, ISN'T SHE?
WHERE TO?
SHOULDN'T YOU GO?
I SEE.
SHE HASN'T RETURNED YET, IT SEEMS.
...
DEMON EXAMS, HUH?
I'M NOT SURE IF WHAT WE'RE DOING IS THE RIGHT THING.
BUT IN REALITY, IT'S ONLY IN THE INTEREST OF HUMANITY.
WE CLAIM IT'S FOR THE GOOD THE DEMONS,
WHY THE LONG FACE?

TALK ABOUT SERIOUS.
SURE YOU'RE CUT OUT FOR THIS?
...
YOU SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING FUN WHEN YOU TRAINED TO BE A TEACHER IN COLLEGE.
MAYBE THAT LINE OF WORK'S MORE UP YOUR ALLEY.
EDU-CATION, HUH?
JUST SAYIN' THAT'S ANOTHER ROUTE.
YOU'RE GONNA GET WRINKLES IF YOU MOPE AROUND ALL DAY.
THAT'S JUST HOW I AM.
THANKS FOR THE COFFEE.
TNK
トン
HEADING TO LUCY'S?
NOT YET.
I'M GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE DEMON EXAMS FIRST.

...HM?
SAWAKI, YOU GOT A NEW BEST TIME!
AAH...
TOO HOT...

?

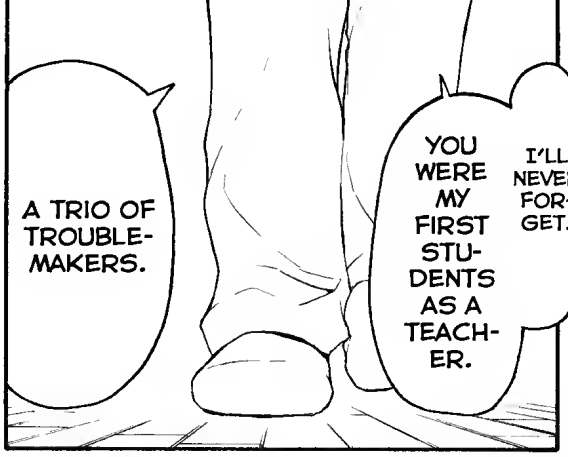


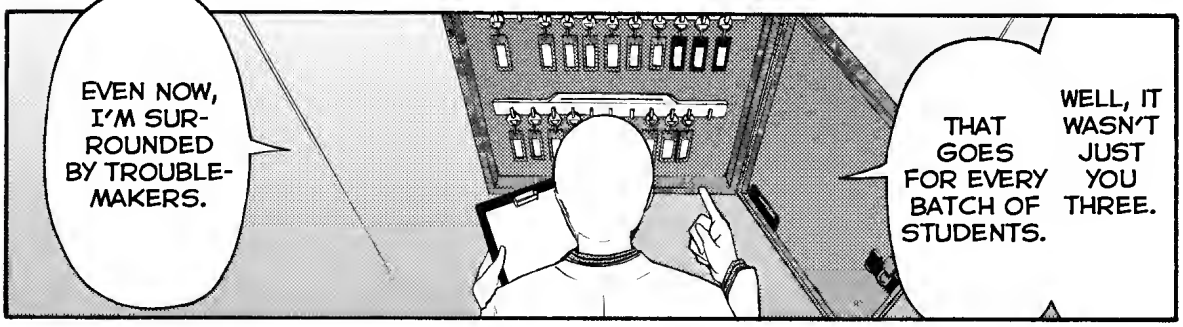
SHH

WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTH-ING.
SLIDE
SLIDE
...THIS IS OUR LAST STOP.
HM.

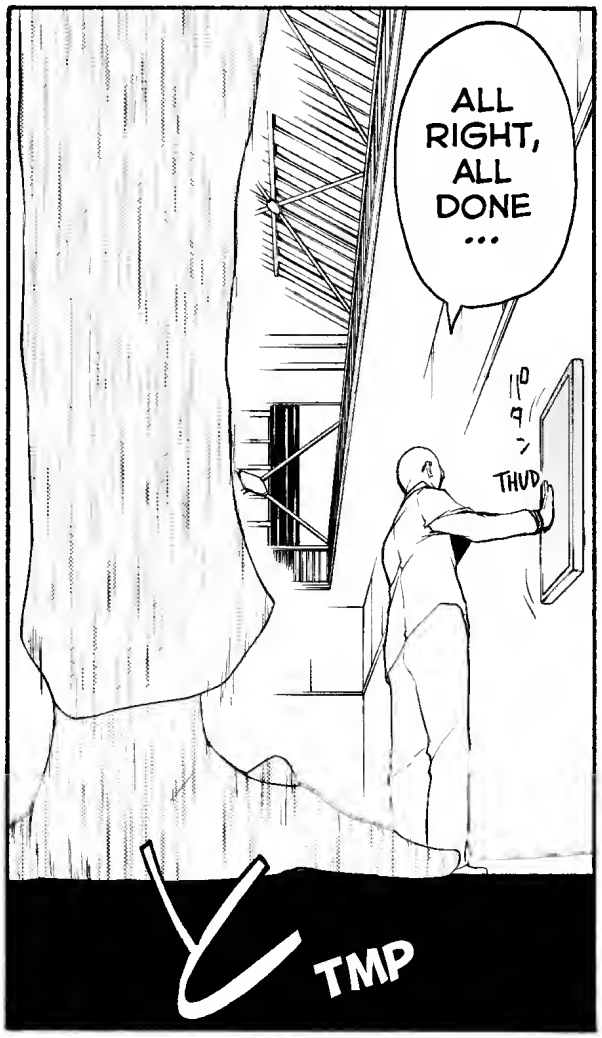
THEY'RE PROBABLY JUST TAKING A BREAK.
GRAB
THE GYMNASTICS CLUB, HUH?
THEY DIDN'T EVEN CLEAN UP...
I'M SURE THEY'LL BE BACK SOON... HUP.
SWISH
...HOW DEXTROUS.
I'M AN ALUMNUS FROM HERE.
SO ARE JURI...
TOSS
...AND NADESHIKO.
PNT

FWIP
FWIP
OH, YEAH?

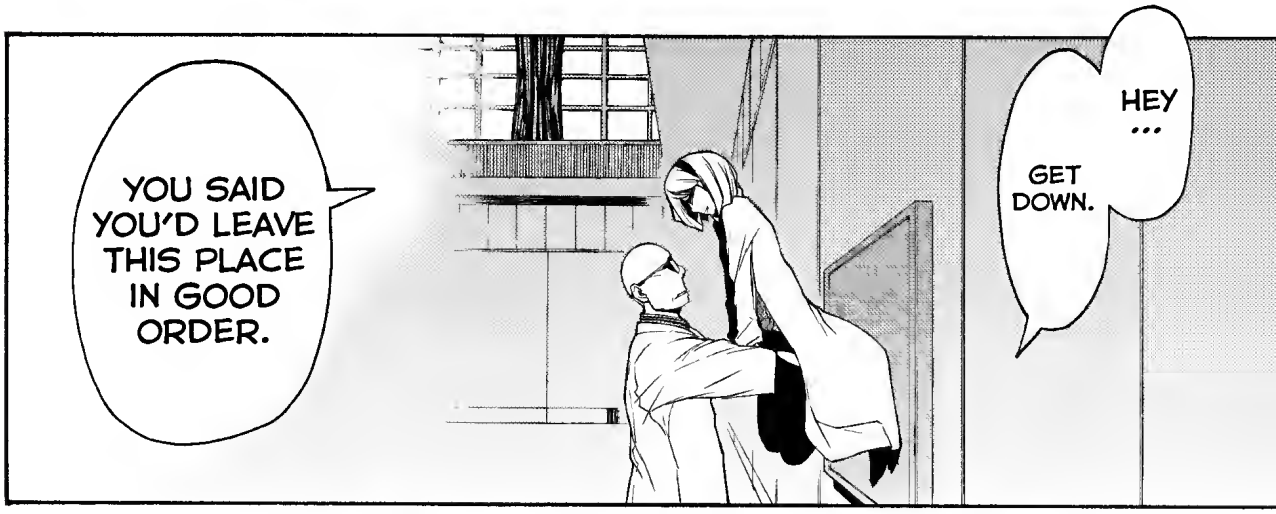

A TRIO OF TROUBLE-MAKERS.
YOU WERE MY FIRST STU-DENTS AS A TEACH-ER.
I'LL NEVER FOR-GET.


EVEN NOW, I'M SUR-ROUNDED BY TROUBLE-MAKERS.
THAT GOES FOR EVERY BATCH OF STUDENTS.
WELL, IT WASN'T JUST YOU THREE.

FWOO


ALL RIGHT, ALL DONE ...
THUD
TMP

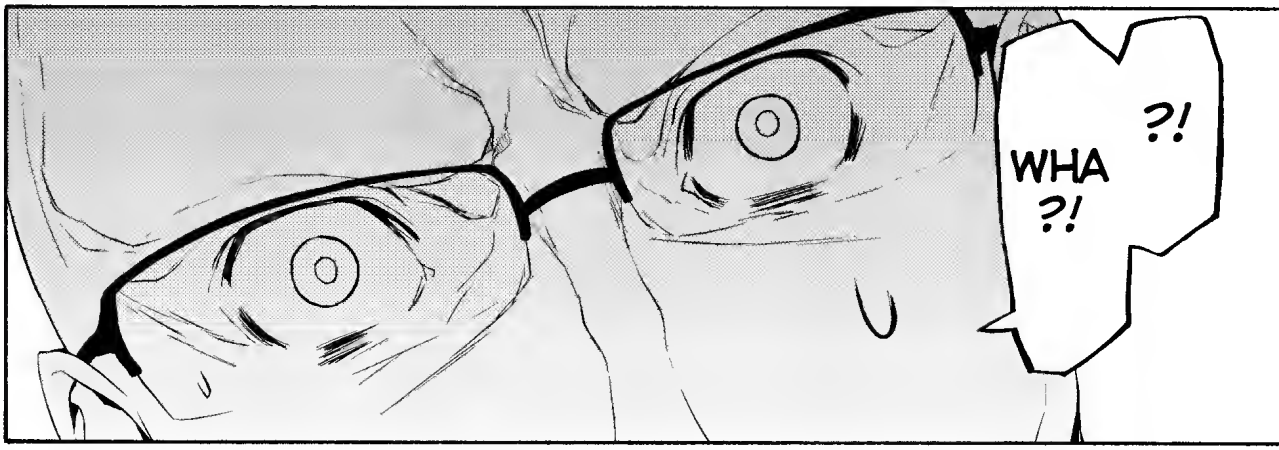
すとん
FWUMP
!
...ALL DONE?

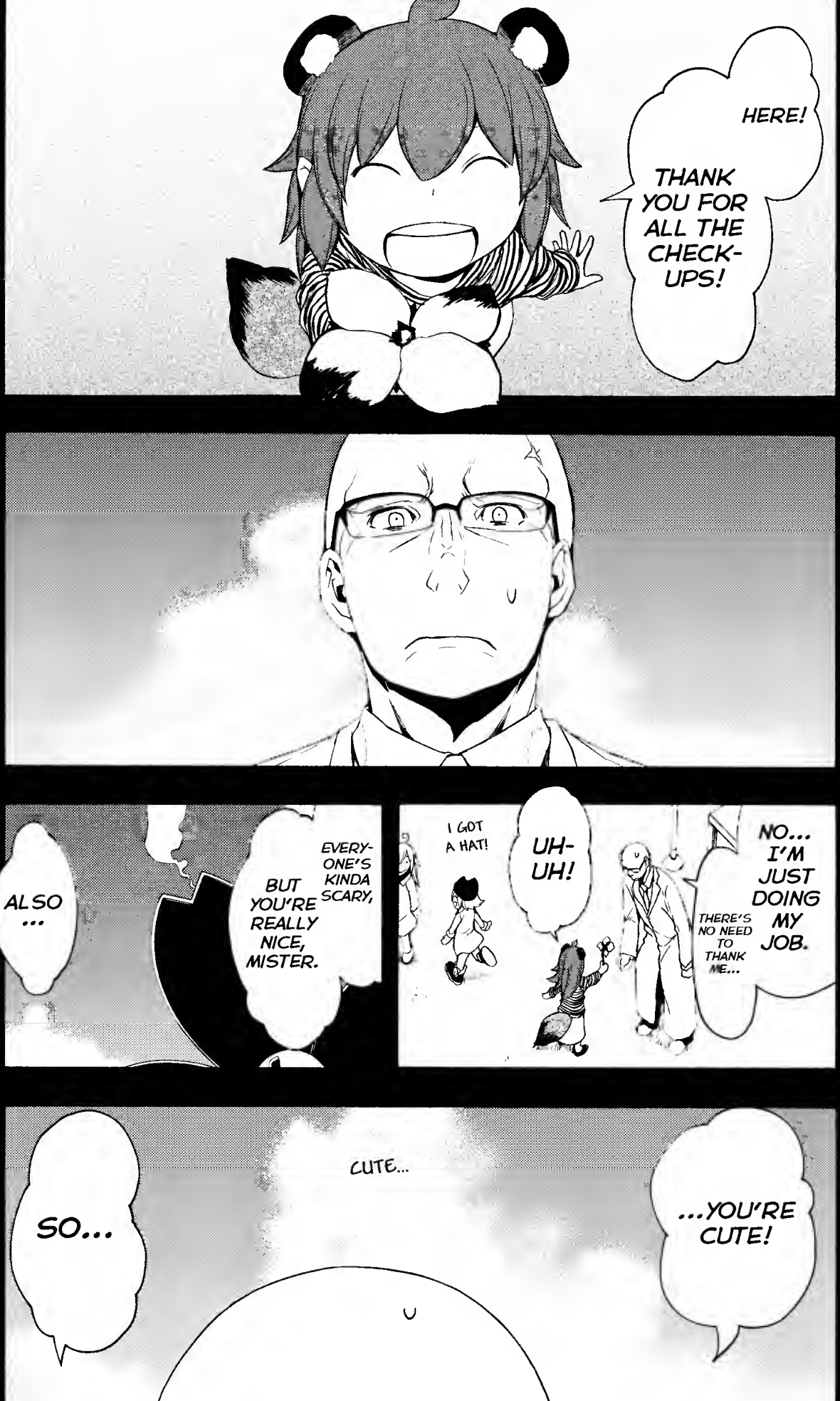

HEY ...
GET DOWN.
YOU SAID YOU'D LEAVE THIS PLACE IN GOOD ORDER.

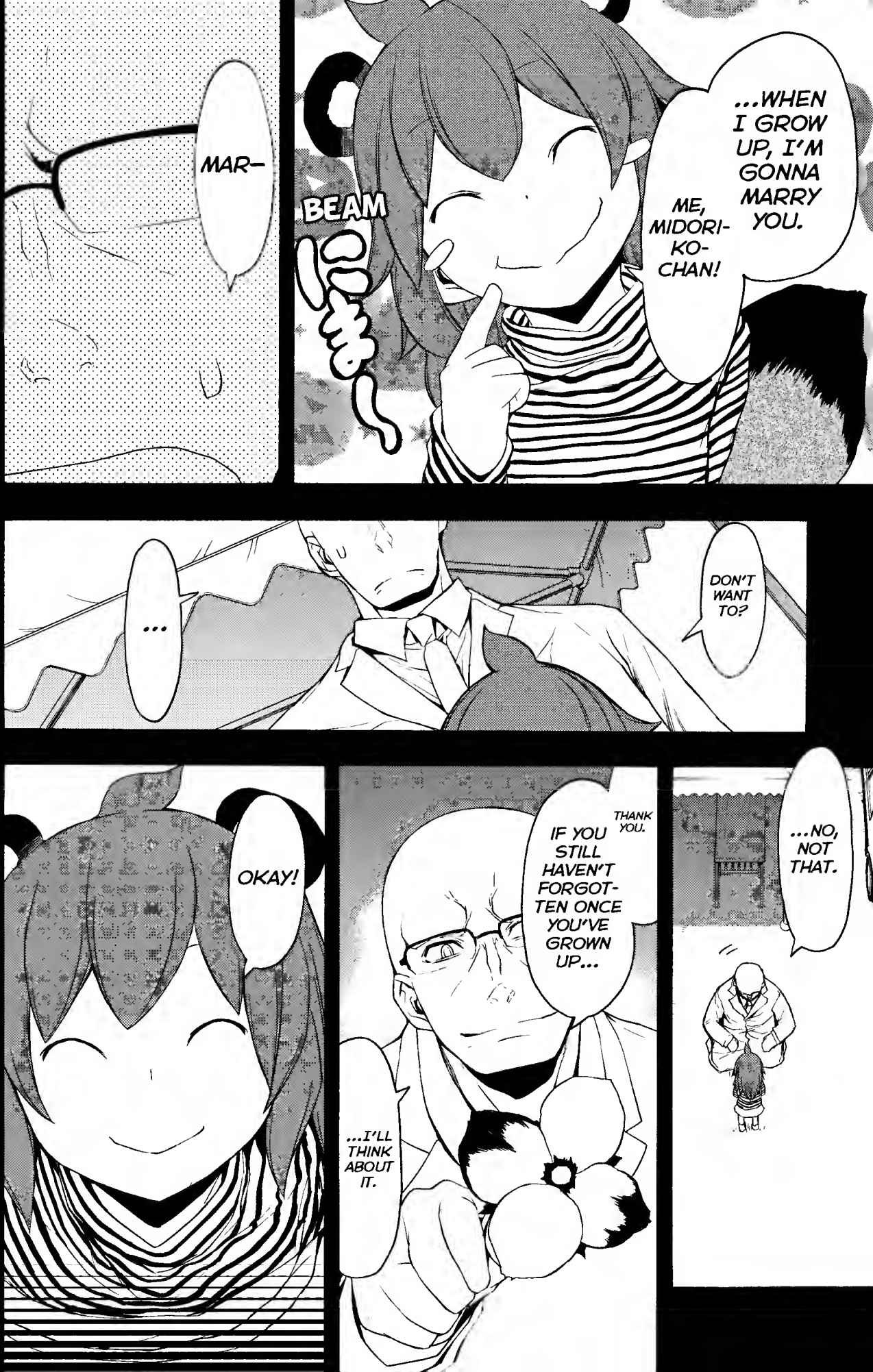
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING LEFT FOR YOU TO SETTLE?

SET-TLE?
YOU STILL HAVEN'T MADE GOOD...
...ON YOUR PROMISE FROM YEARS AGO.
A VERY IMPORTANT PROMISE...
SQUEEZE
...I'VE KEPT LOCKED IN MY HEART ALL THIS TIME.
KNOCK IT OFF.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AW, COME ON.
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

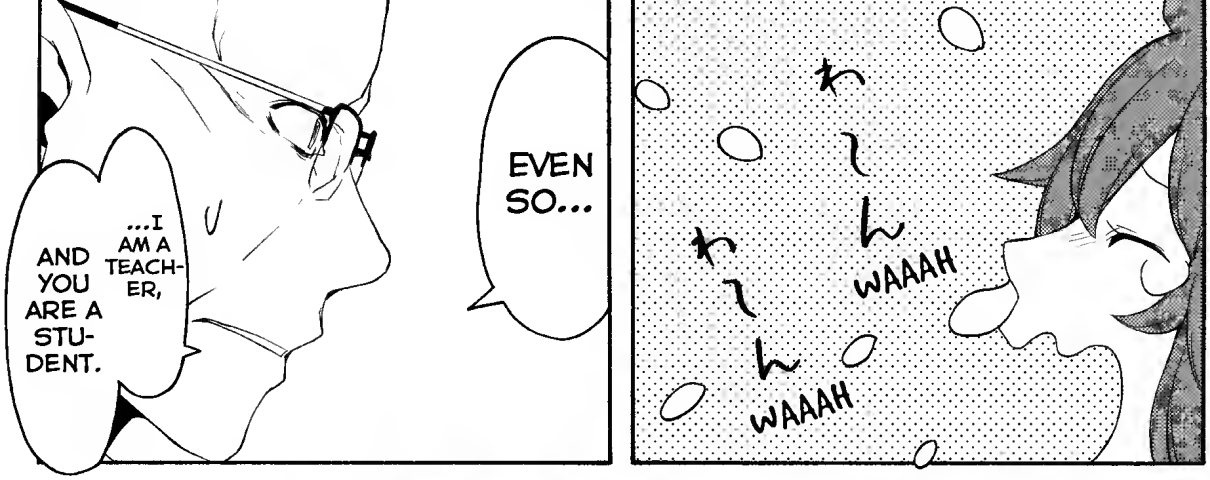
EVERY-
THING.
YEOW!
JOLT
YANK


?!
WHA
?!

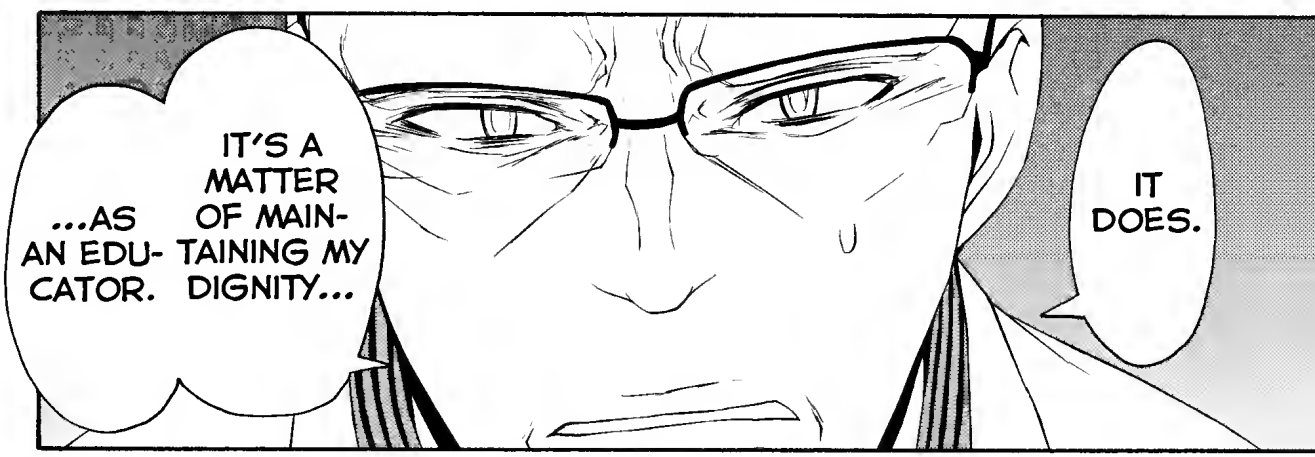

HERE!
THANK YOU FOR ALL THE CHECK-UPS!
NO... I'M JUST DOING MY JOB.
THERE'S NO NEED TO THANK ME...
UH-UH!
I GOT A HAT!
EVERY-ONE'S KINDA SCARY,
BUT YOU'RE REALLY NICE, MISTER.
ALSO ...
...YOU'RE CUTE!
CUTE...
SO...

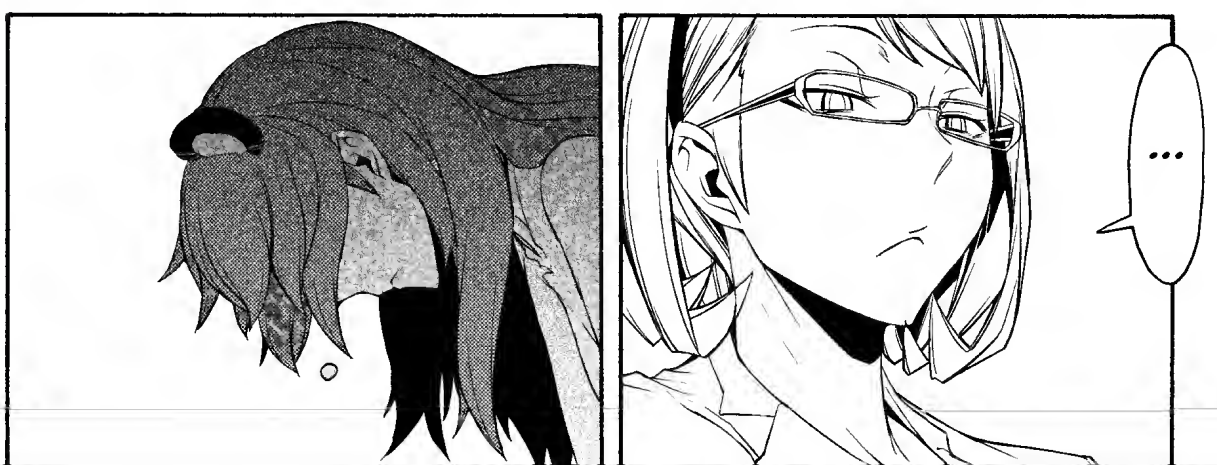

MAR–
BEAM
にぱ～
...WHEN I GROW UP, I'M GONNA MARRY YOU.
ME, MIDORI-KO-CHAN!
DON'T WANT TO?
...
...NO, NOT THAT.
THANK YOU.
IF YOU STILL HAVEN'T FORGOT-TEN ONCE YOU'VE GROWN UP...
...I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.
OKAY!

はらはら
WHIMPER
UUH...
I'D NEVER FOR-GET!
HOW COULD YOU, UZU-CHAN?!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS THE LAST DAY I GET TO SEE YOU...
うわ〜ん
WAAAH
I NEVER WOULD'VE KNOWN IF SHIINA-SAN HADN'T TOLD ME.

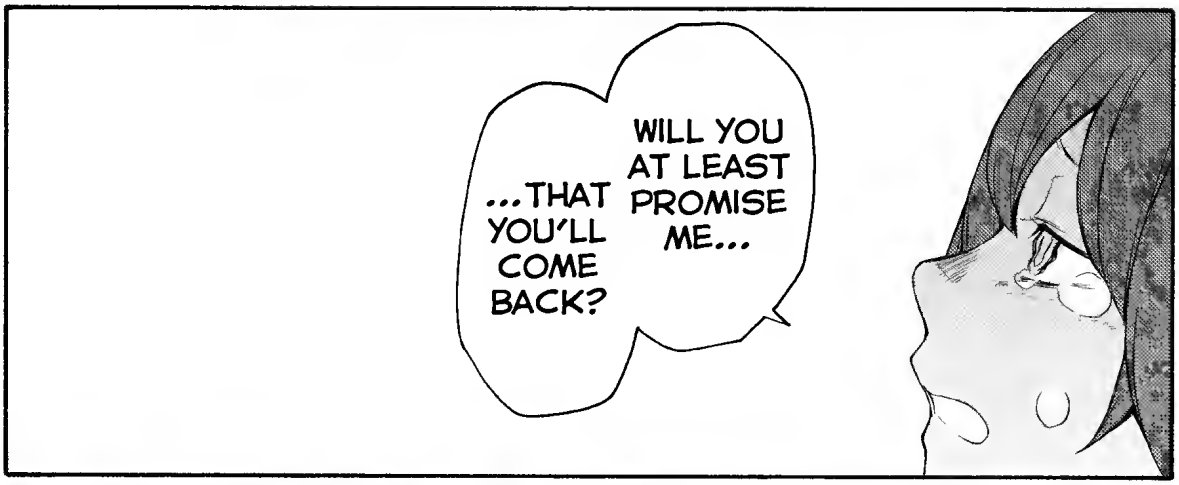

EVEN SO...
...I AM A TEACHER,
AND YOU ARE A STUDENT.
わぁん
WAAAH
わぁん
WAAAH

TEACHER?
STUDENT?
THAT DOESN'T MATTER!

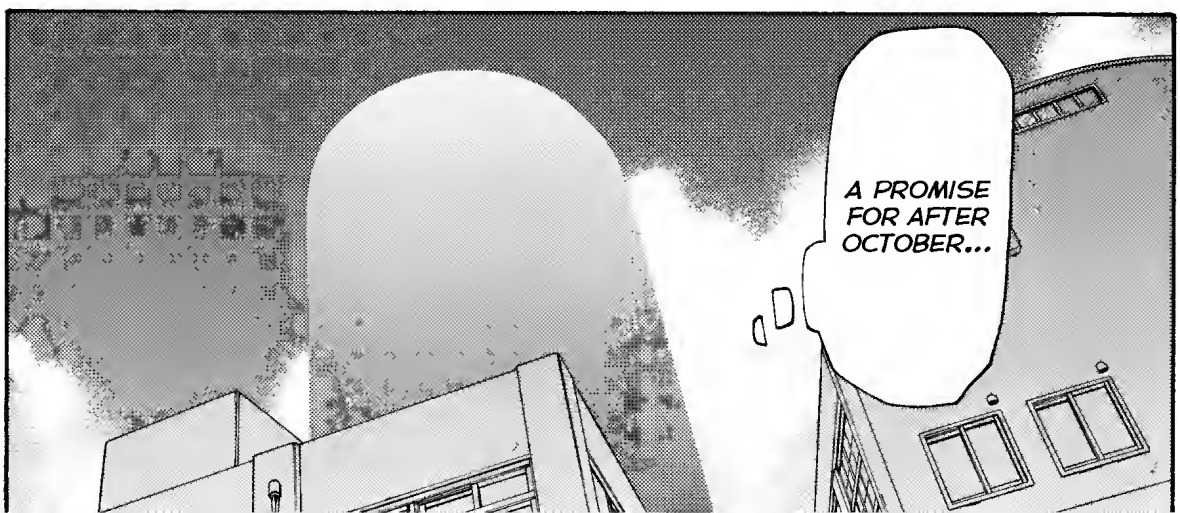

IT DOES.
IT'S A MATTER OF MAINTAINING MY DIGNITY...
...AS AN EDUCATOR.

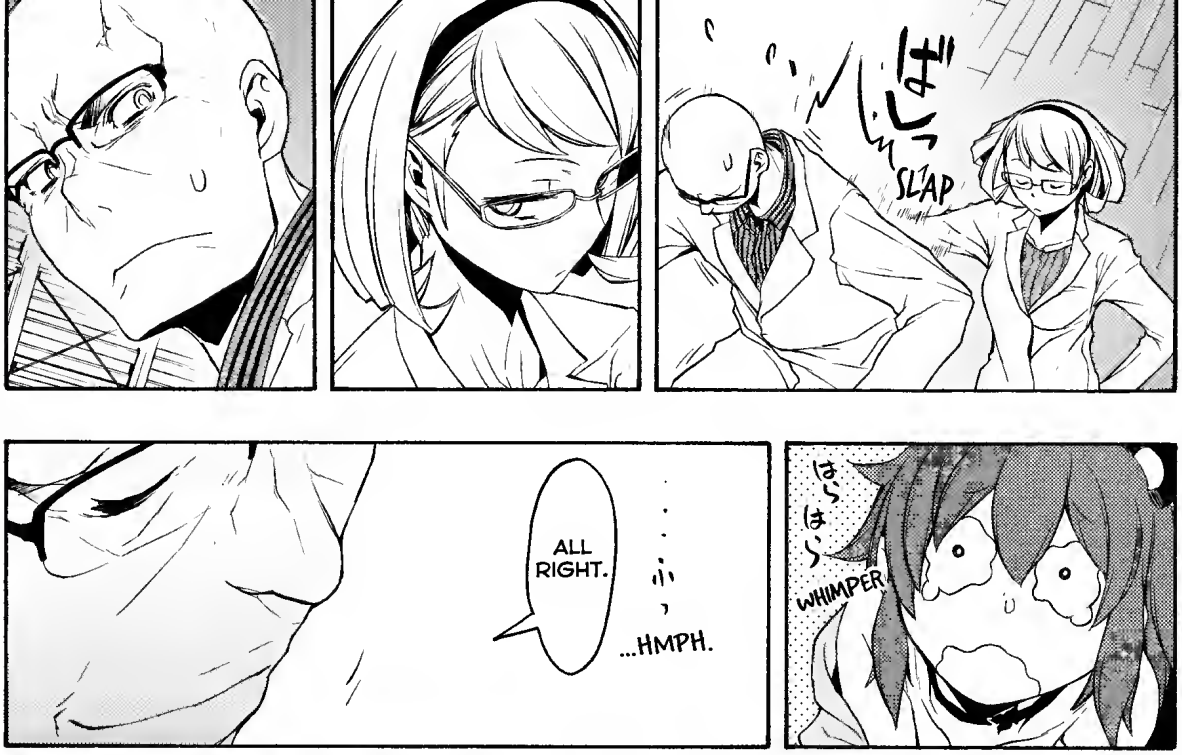

...

THEN COME BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER YOU FINISH WHAT YOU NEED TO.
...
FINE.


WILL YOU AT LEAST PROMISE ME...
...THAT YOU'LL COME BACK?

...


A PROMISE FOR AFTER OCTOBER...


ばしっ
SLAP

ALL RIGHT.
...HMPH.
はらはら
WHIMPER

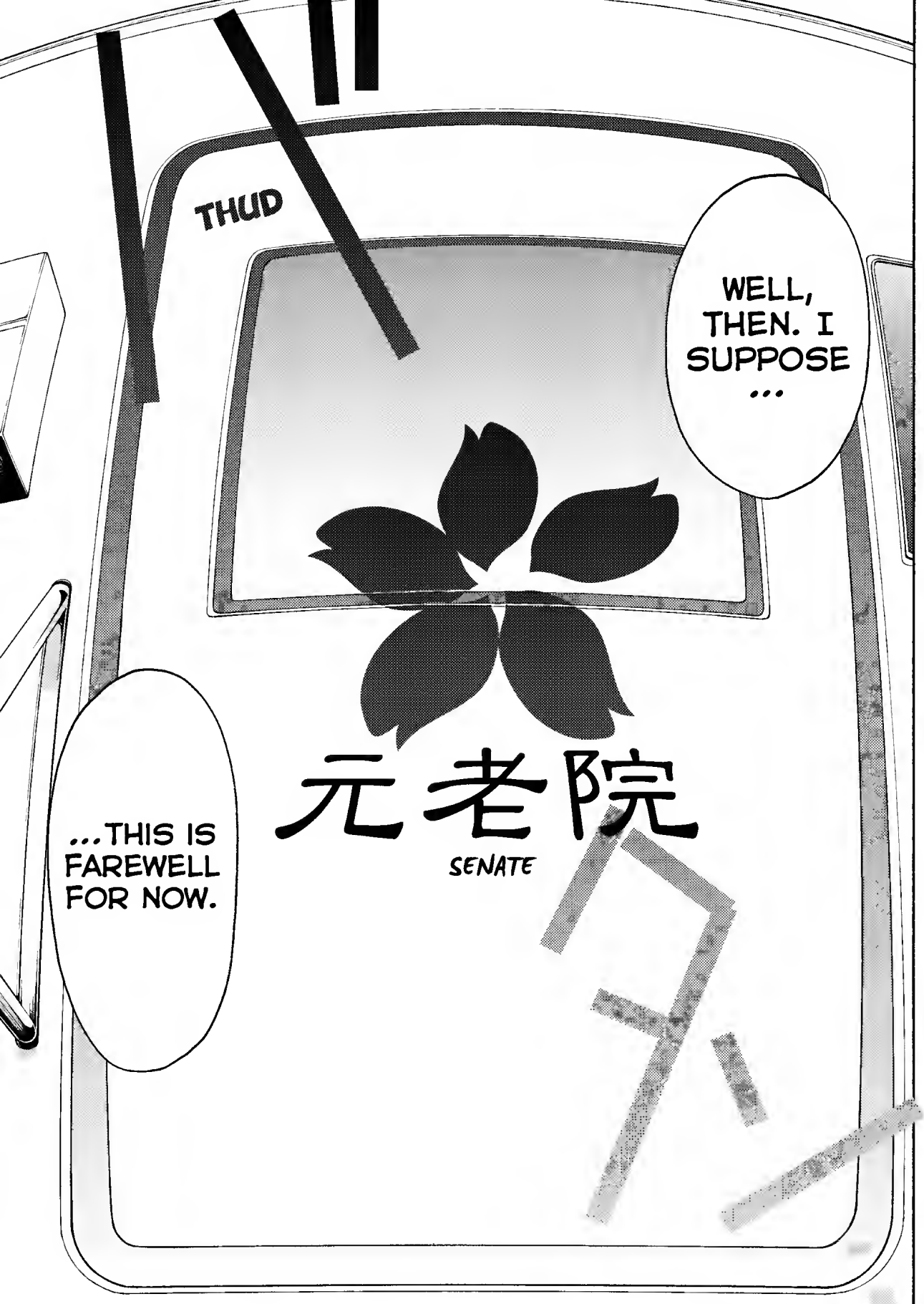
LOOKS LIKE I'VE MADE ANOTHER PROMISE.
ONCE EVERY-THING IS OVER, I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK.
YOU HAVE MY WORD.

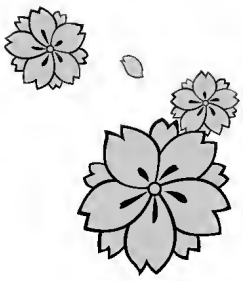
BEAM
はーっ
'KAY!
OH, BUT WAIT ...
YOU'RE ON LEAVE NOW, RIGHT?
THEN THAT MEANS ...
...WE'RE NOT A STUDENT AND TEACHER ANYMORE!
YAY! GIMME A KISS, UZU-CHAN!
C'MON!
チュー
チュウチュチュ
PECK PECK PECK
WHA?! CUT THAT OUT!
I SAID KNOCK IT OFF!
COME ON, WHAT'S THE PROB-LEM?
OH!

IS IT BECAUSE SHIINA-SAN'S WATCHING? OKAY! I'LL JUST USE MY RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS SKILLS TO–
HEY!
FWISH
ひょい
LIFT
SWAP
WHA–
HWAH!

YOU KNOW I GRADUATED FROM HERE, RIGHT?
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD TALES OF A LEGENDARY GYMNASTICS CLUB MEMBER?
SNAP
FLAP
THE ONE WHO JOINED THE SENATE?
DON'T TELL ME...
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU HAVE A LOT OF NERVE DOING THAT WHILE WEARING MY FACE.
FWOO
FWOO
TIME FOR A LESSON!
HELP MEEE!
I'LL BE IN THE CAR.

パタン
THINK
FLICK
ALL DONE?
THAT REMINDS ME, ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THOSE TWO BEFORE WE GO BACK?
PHEW.
IT'S NOTHING...
WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU LOOK AWFUL.
VRUM
IT'S FINE.
I'LL SEE THEM AGAIN.
SNAP
There you have it.
Nadeshiko
Roger! I'm in Hakone right now!
Juri
I'll call you once October's over-
I SEE...
THINK
SQUEE
I KNOW...
CLOSE THE DOOR, MURASAKI.
M'KAY.
LET'S BE ON OUR WAY.


THUD
WELL, THEN. I SUPPOSE ...
元老院
SENATE
...THIS IS FAREWELL FOR NOW.



VRRR
ブルルル…
ALL RIGHT. THEY'RE IN YOUR HANDS.
MEEEE
AYE. LEAVE THEM TO ME.
MEE
MEE
SEE YA, SHIDOU! DON'T CRASH!
DRIVE SAFE!
LET'S STOP BY A HOT SPRING ON OUR WAY BACK!
うふふ
FU FU
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYWHERE THAT OFFERS MIXED BATHING...
I'VE GOT THE LATE SHIFT AFTER THIS ...
WILL WE MAKE IT BACK IN TIME?
SUCKS SPENDING SUMMER BREAK COOKIN' IN TOKYO!
THE INN MIGHT BE RUNDOWN, BUT IT'S THE MOUNTAINS!
MINA ...
巴の宿
TOMOE'S INN
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
HOT SPRINGS ARE DESERTED IN THE SUMMERTIME.

HERE WE ARE.
I WELCOME THE COMPANY.

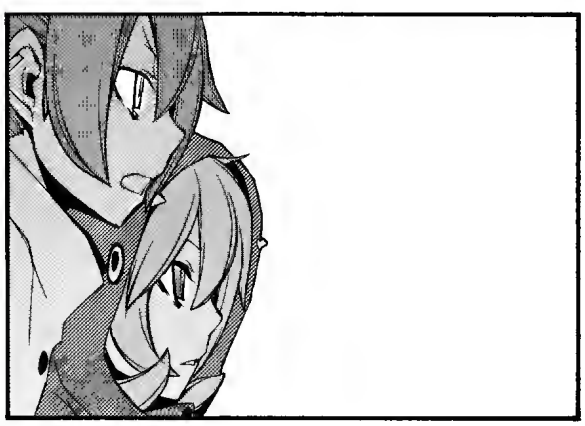
#99 COUNTRYSIDE KIDS

RATTLE
AYE.
IS THE YAMABIKO DOING WELL?

!
スッ
SWIF

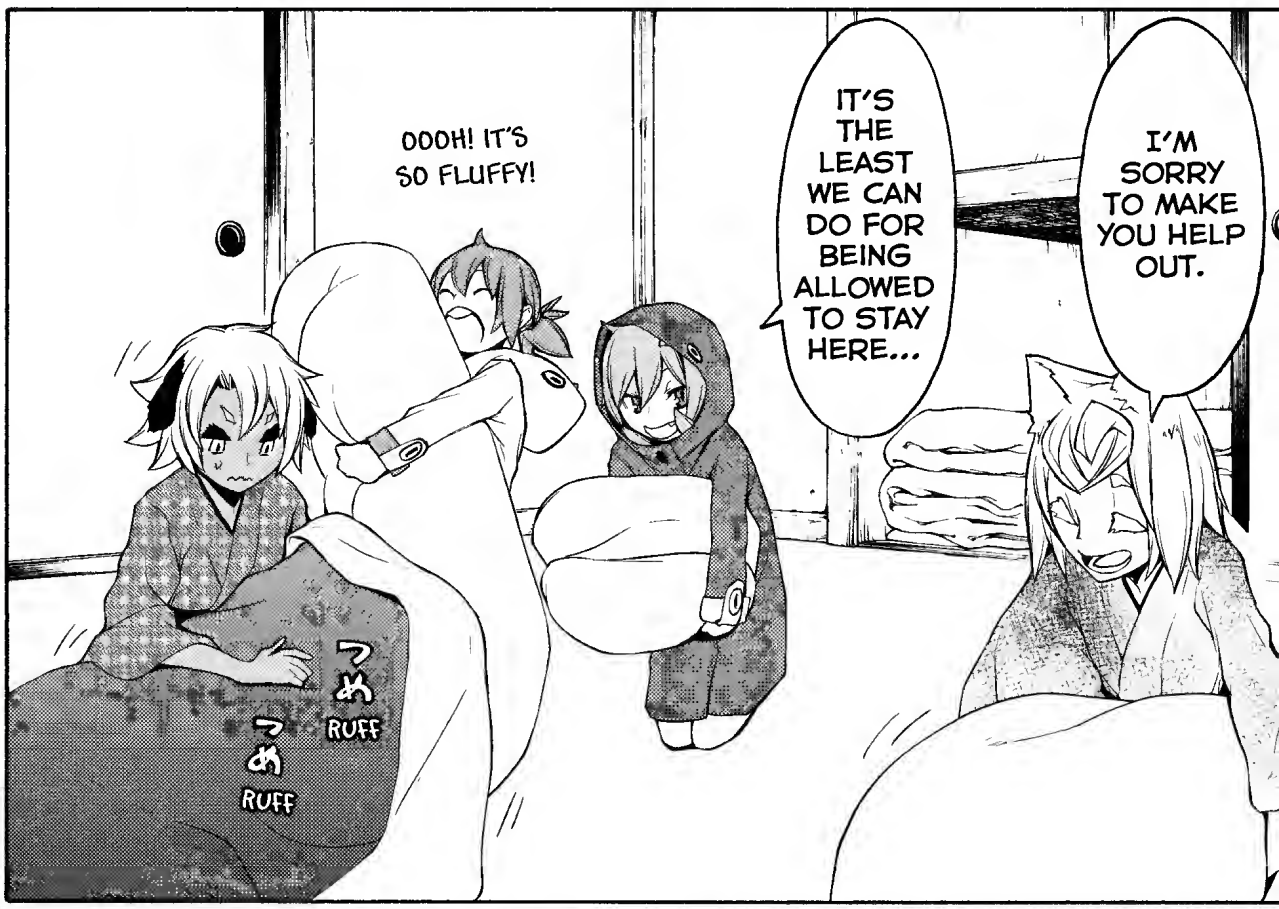
HOW PROPER
OOH ...

WE'VE BEEN EX-PECT-ING YOU.
THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE JOURNEY TO OUR HUMBLE INN.

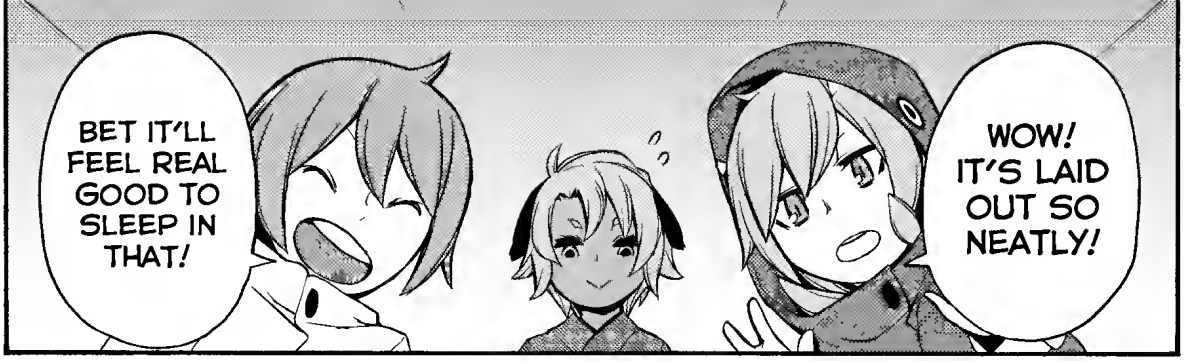


?

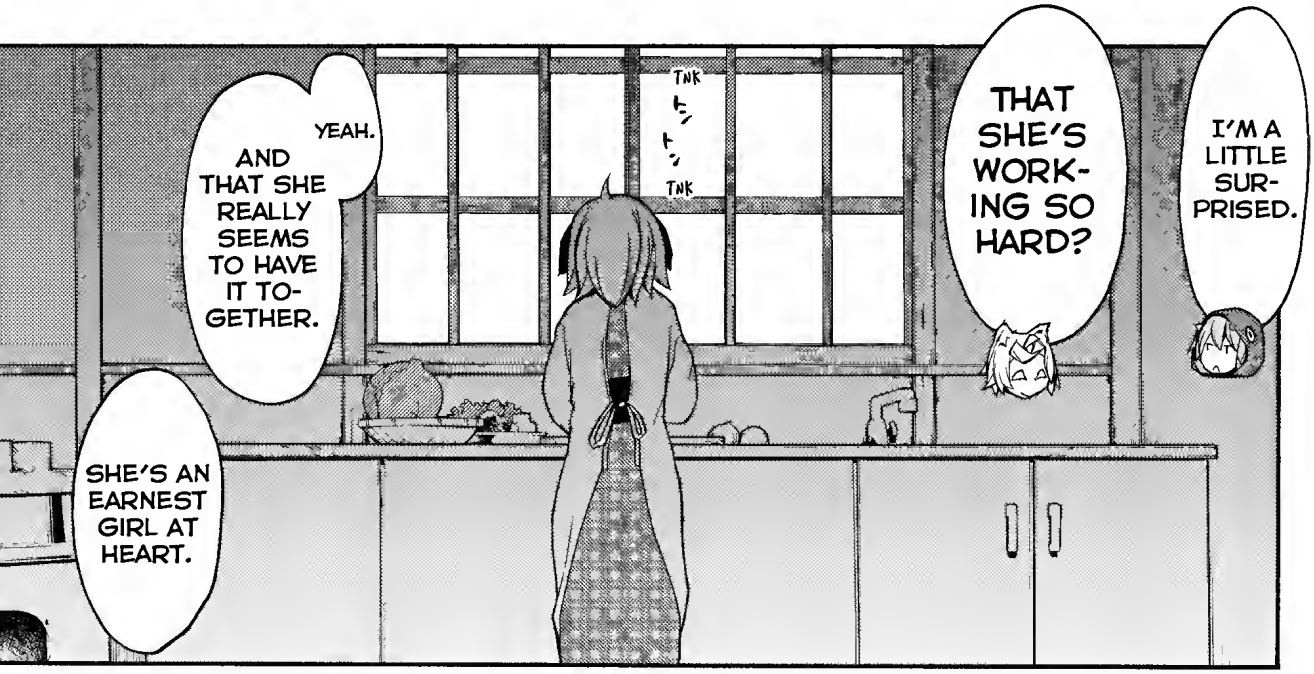
NYAAAH!
MY LEG'S ASLEEP!
THERE GOES THAT!
DON'T TELL ME YOU WERE SITTING THE WHOLE TIME...


I'M SORRY TO MAKE YOU HELP OUT.
IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO FOR BEING ALLOWED TO STAY HERE...
OOOH! IT'S SO FLUFFY!
RUFF
RUFF

HUSTLE HUSTLE
NEAT


BET IT'LL FEEL REAL GOOD TO SLEEP IN THAT!
WOW! IT'S LAID OUT SO NEATLY!

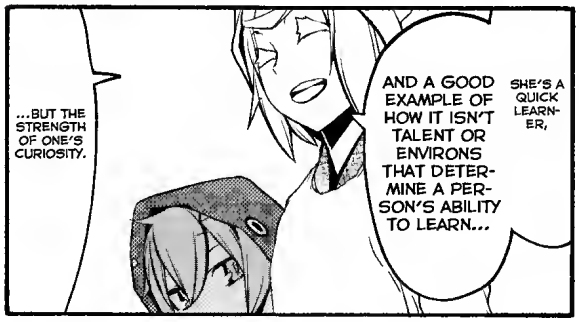
BEAM


TNK トン トン TNK
YEAH. AND THAT SHE REALLY SEEMS TO HAVE IT TOGETHER.
SHE'S AN EARNEST GIRL AT HEART.
THAT SHE'S WORKING SO HARD?
I'M A LITTLE SURPRISED.

YOUNG SHIDOU.
WOW! SHIDOU-CHAN WORKED HERE, TOO?
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE SURVIVED IN THE WILD.
SHIDOU WAS A HARD WORKER, TOO, ALBEIT CLUMSY.

WILD DEMONS WHO ARE *TOO FERAL* TO LIVE IN SAKURASHIN FIRST LIVE HERE.
THAT'S HOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN LESS AND LESS OF THEM AS OF LATE.
TNK TNK TNK
THAT JUST GOES TO SHOW THERE ARE FEWER WILD DEMONS.
TIMES CHANGE.

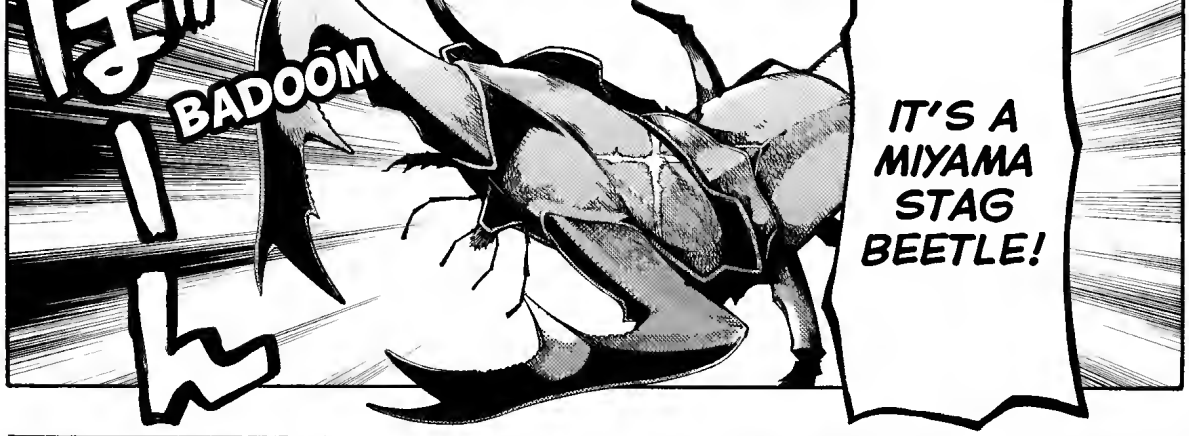
HUH ...

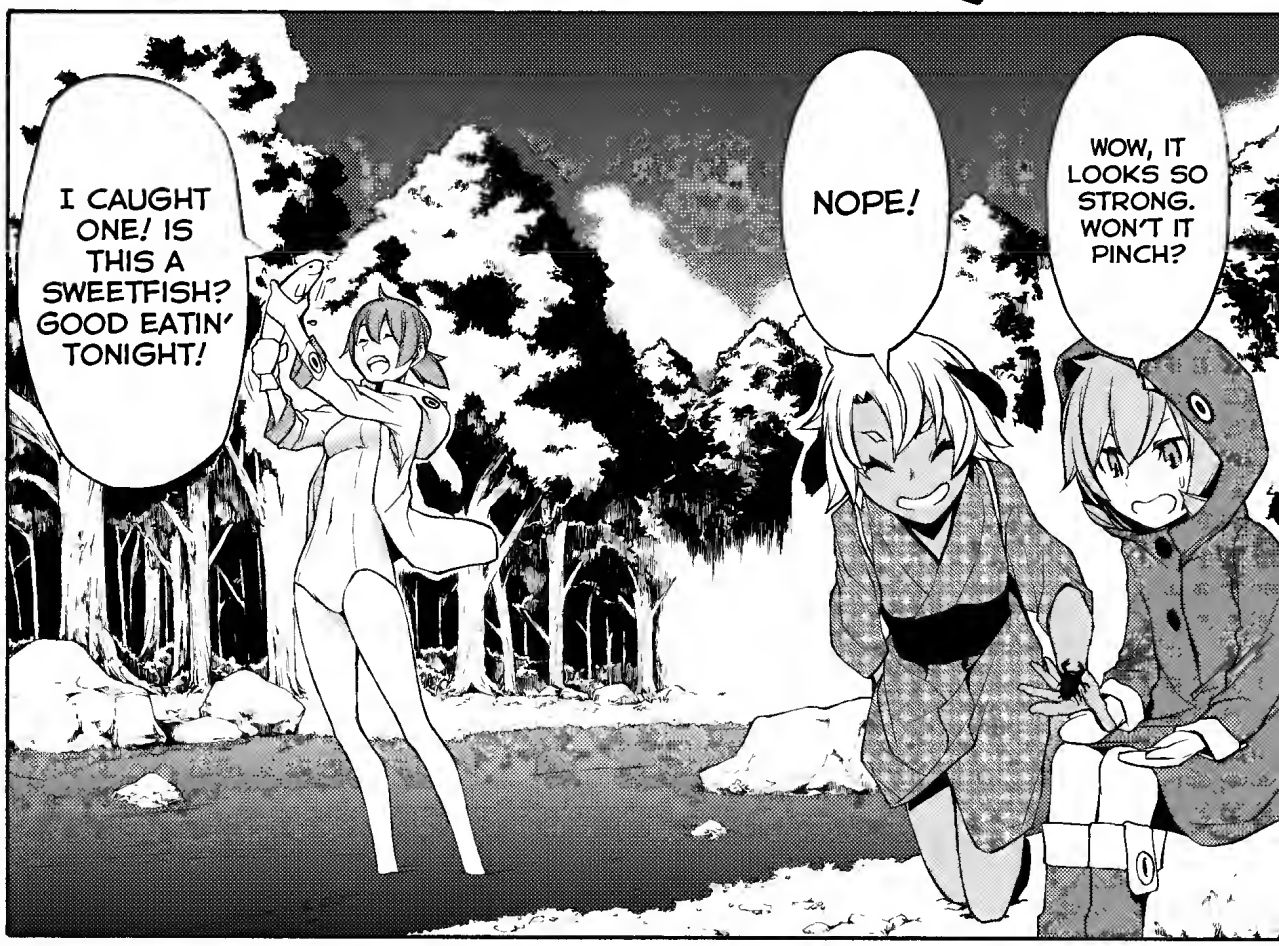

SHE'S A QUICK LEARNER,
AND A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW IT ISN'T TALENT OR ENVIRONS THAT DETERMINE A PERSON'S ABILITY TO LEARN...
...BUT THE STRENGTH OF ONE'S CURIOSITY.

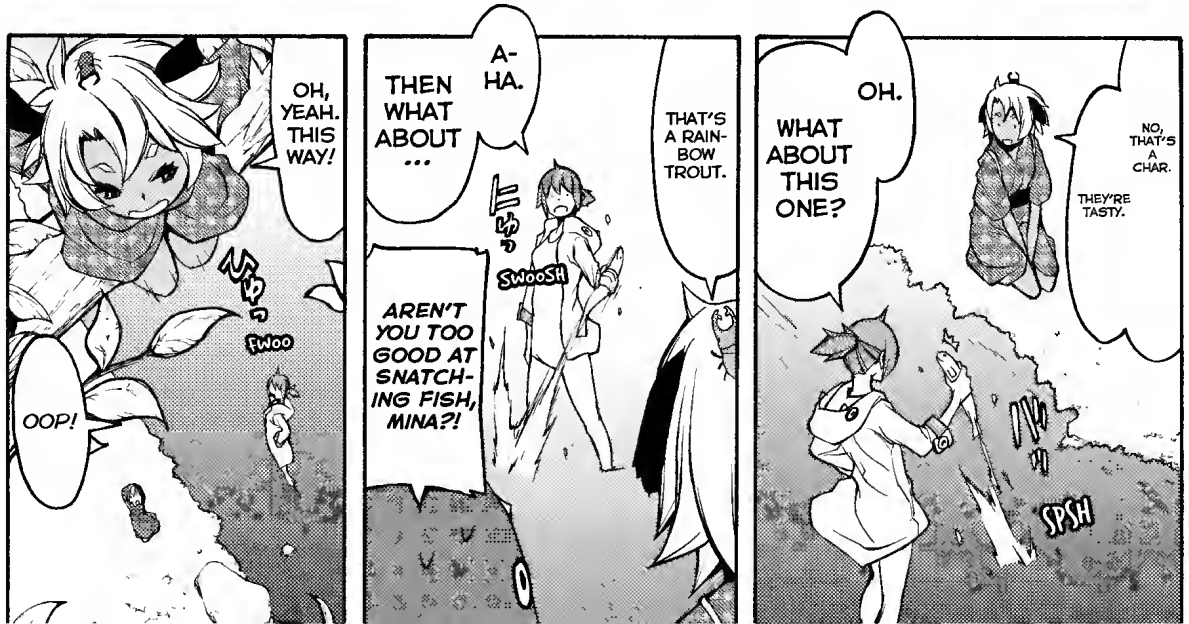
OOH, THAT'S GOOD! WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO COOK?
FU, FU ...

SHE MUST BE REALLY STUDIOUS.
SHE LEARNED HOW TO USE THE PHONE I GAVE HER IN NO TIME,
AND IT SEEMS SHE'S BEEN ASKING HER COOKING TEACHER ALL SORTS OF QUESTIONS.
TEACHER?
BRRR
プルルル♪

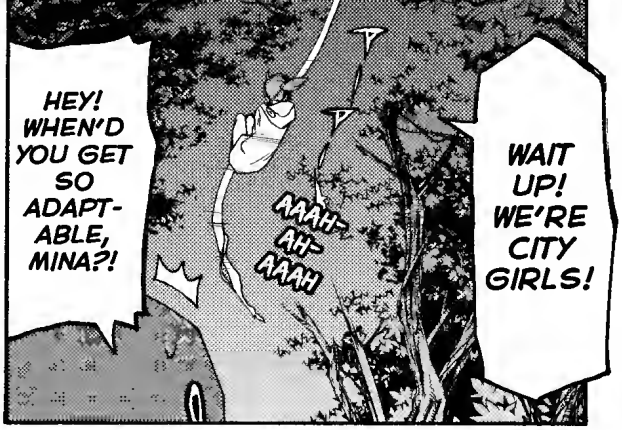
I HEAR SHE'S GOOD WITH JAPANESE CUISINE.
HUH...
BEEP
BEEP
TAK
TAK
IT BROOKE ...
ぼろ DRIP
ぼろ DRIP
IT'S JUST OUT OF BATTERY.
CHARGE IT FOR A WHILE.
YOU ALL HAVE HELPED ENOUGH.
GO ON OUT AND PLAY!
TOSS
TOSS
MEEE
MEEE

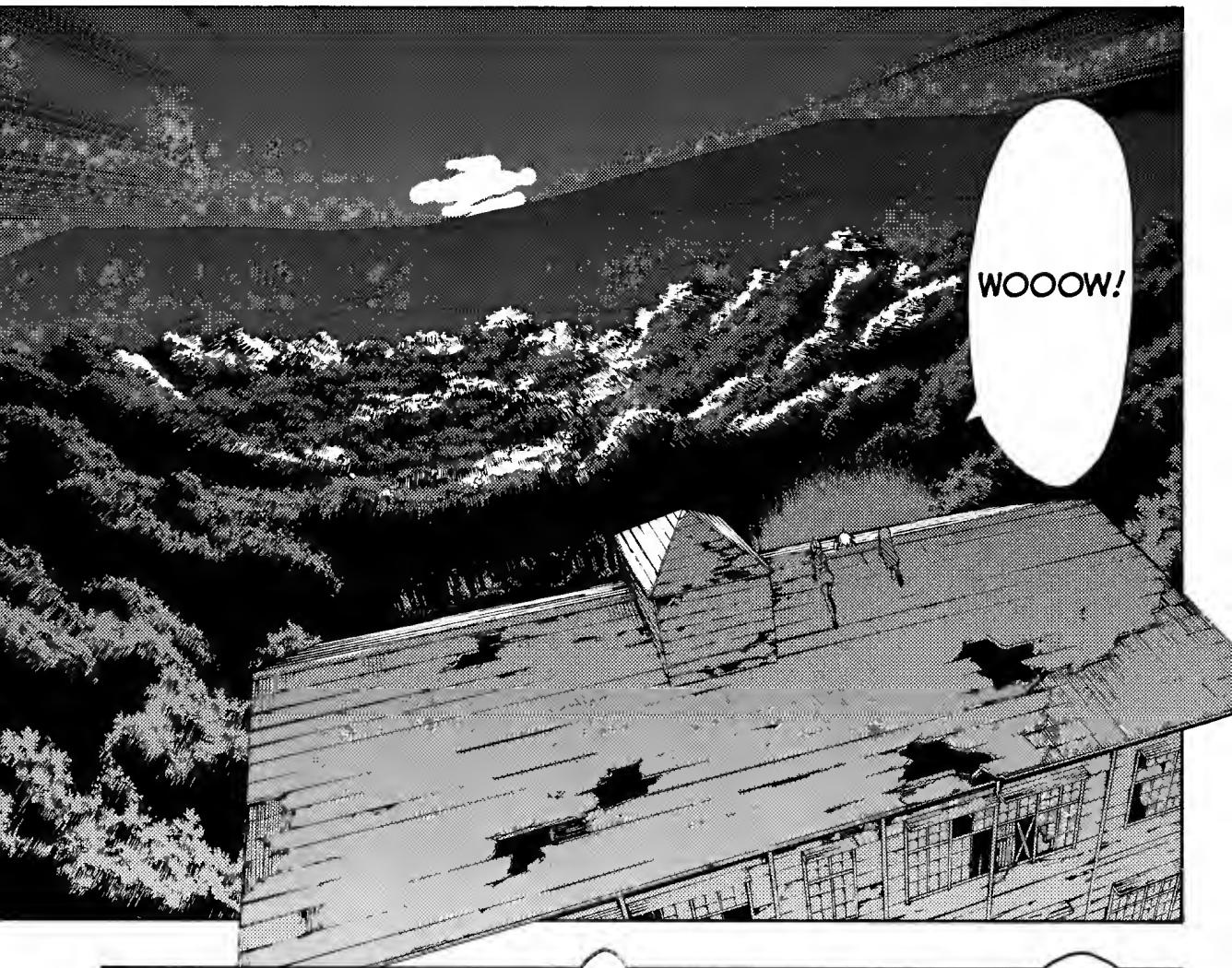

BADOOM
IT'S A MIYAMA STAG BEETLE!


I CAUGHT ONE! IS THIS A SWEETFISH? GOOD EATIN' TONIGHT!
NOPE!
WOW, IT LOOKS SO STRONG. WON'T IT PINCH?


OH, YEAH. THIS WAY!
FWOO
OOP!
A-HA.
THEN WHAT ABOUT ...
SWOOSH
AREN'T YOU TOO GOOD AT SNATCHING FISH, MINA?!
THAT'S A RAINBOW TROUT.
OH.
WHAT ABOUT THIS ONE?
NO, THAT'S A CHAR.
THEY'RE TASTY.
SPSH

ぷよぷよ
POP

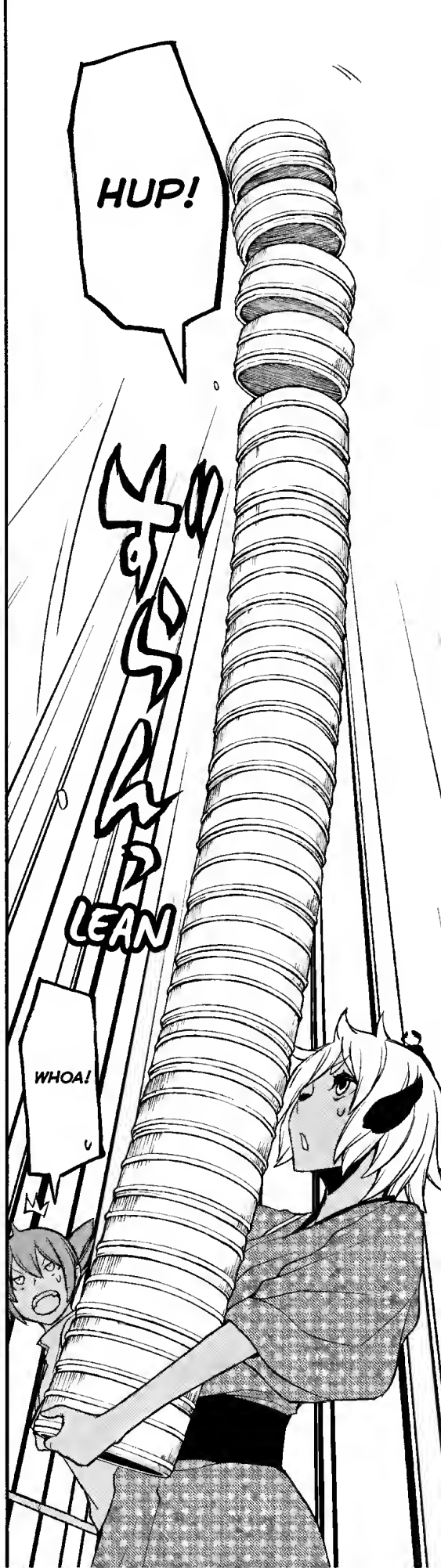

HEY! WHEN'D YOU GET SO ADAPT-ABLE, MINA?!
AAAH-AH-AAAH
WAIT UP! WE'RE CITY GIRLS!

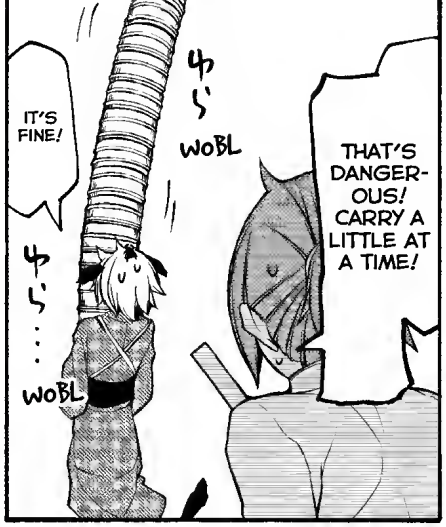

WOOOW!

FU, FU, FU.
YEAH.
NOW THAT'S SOME-THIN'! WHAT A NICE PLACE!

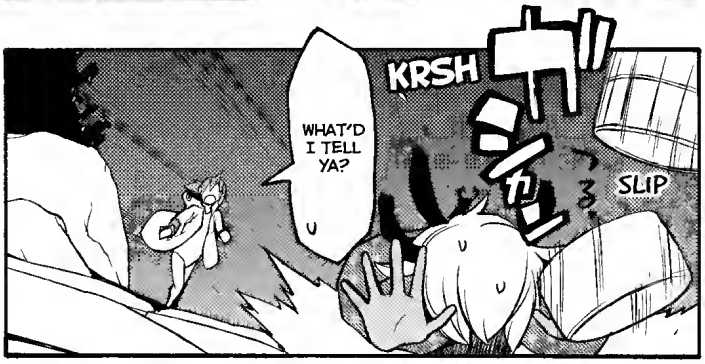
MMM...
YOU SHOULD JUST STAY HERE! THE CITY'S TOO MUCH HUSTLE AND BUSTLE!
I LIKE IT HERE, BUT IT SEEMS NICE THERE, TOO.
THIS PLACE IS INTER-EST-ING, BUT THE TOWN SEEMS INTEREST-ING, TOO.
YOU SOUND PRETTY WISHY-WASHY.
I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
IT'S NOT LIKE THIS SCENERY WILL GO AWAY IF YOU MOVE TO TOWN.
YOU MIGHT HAVE WAY MORE FUN THERE, TOO.
SHIDOU SAID YOU SHOULDN'T LIMIT YER OWN CHOICES.
I WASN'T SURE WHY HE WAS SAYIN' THAT TO A COUPLE OF KIDS...

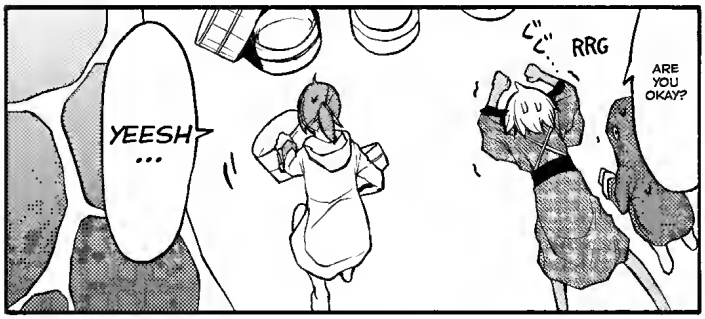
...BUT I GUESS HE HAD A POINT.
SORRY AGAIN. THIS WILL BE THE LAST HELP I ASK FOR.
NO BIGGIE! JUST CALL IT A LITTLE AFTER-MEAL EXER-CISE!
SCRUB SCRUB
SWOOSH


HUP!
ゆらぁ
LEAN
WHOA!

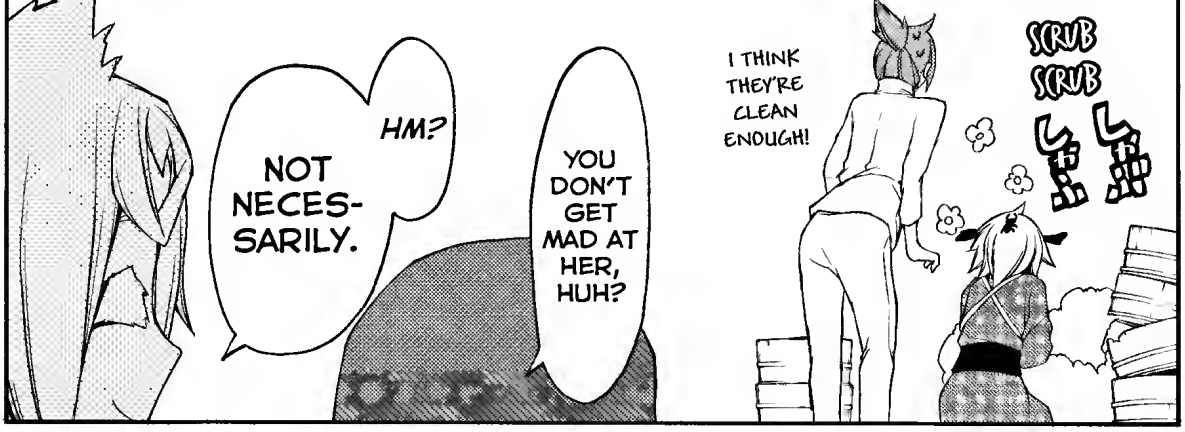

THAT'S DANGEROUS! CARRY A LITTLE AT A TIME!
ゆら
WOBL
IT'S FINE!
ゆら…
WOBL

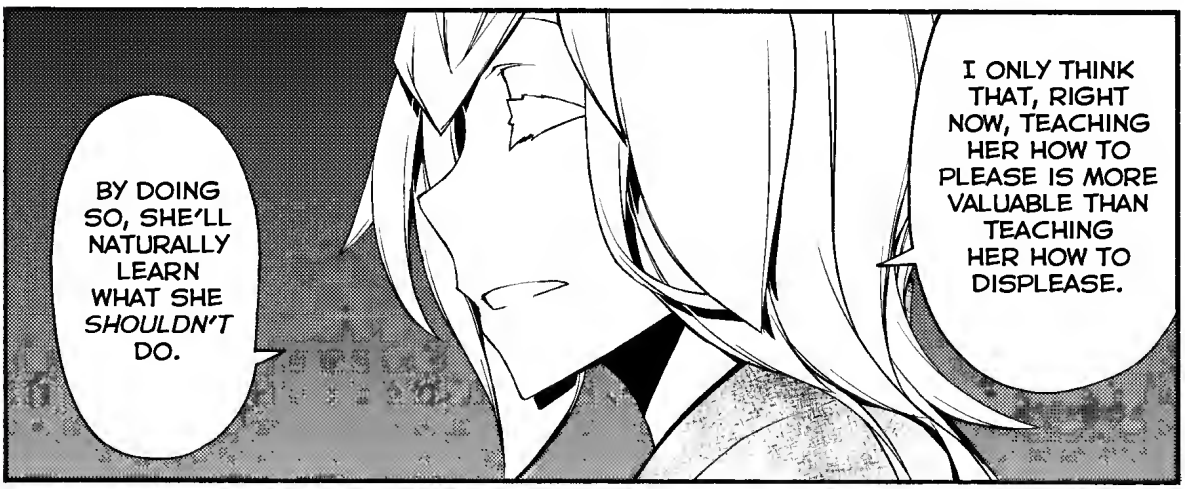
…
NO
SMILE
NO
SMILE…

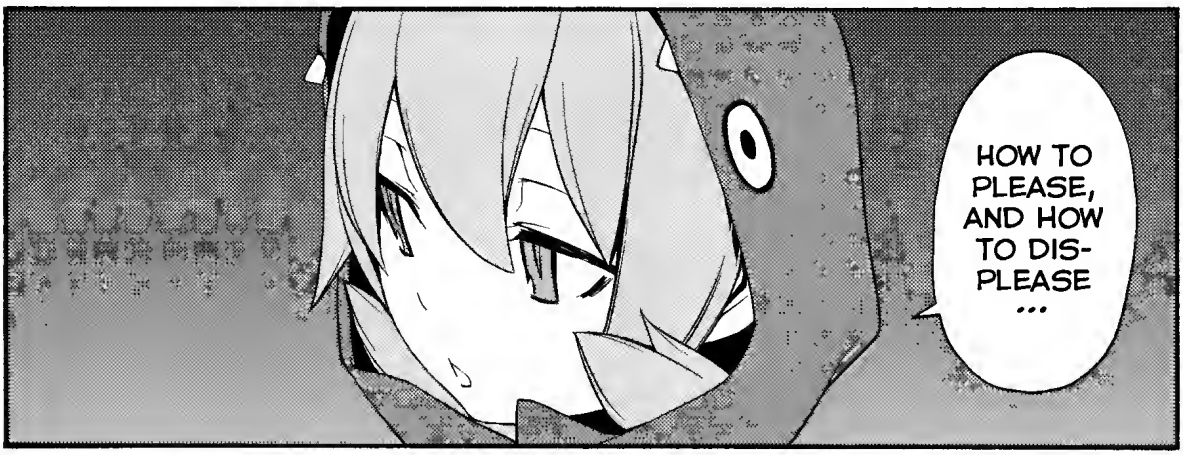

KRSH
ガシャ
WHAT'D I TELL YA?
SLIP

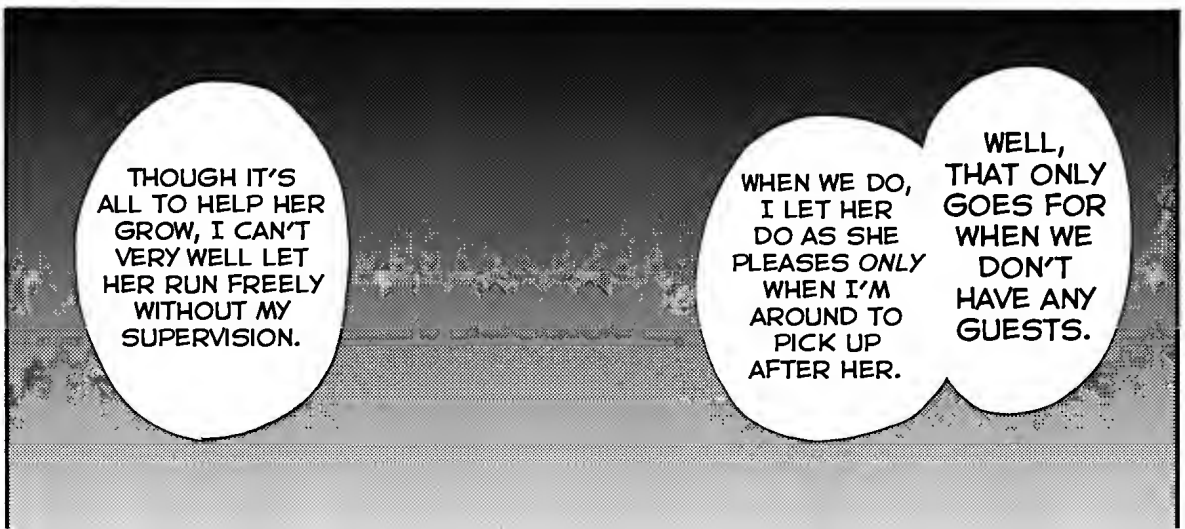

RRG
ARE YOU OKAY?
YEESH…

HM.
WELL DONE. THEY'RE SPOTLESS.
THESE WILL POUR WELL.


I THINK THEY'RE CLEAN ENOUGH!
SCRUB SCRUB
YOU DON'T GET MAD AT HER, HUH?
HM?
NOT NECES-SARILY.


I ONLY THINK THAT, RIGHT NOW, TEACHING HER HOW TO PLEASE IS MORE VALUABLE THAN TEACHING HER HOW TO DISPLEASE.
BY DOING SO, SHE'LL NATURALLY LEARN WHAT SHE *SHOULDN'T* DO.

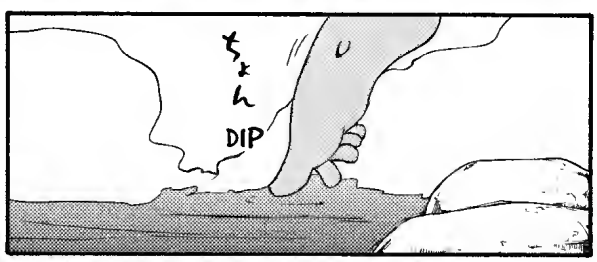

HOW TO PLEASE, AND HOW TO DIS-PLEASE ...


WELL, THAT ONLY GOES FOR WHEN WE DON'T HAVE ANY GUESTS.
WHEN WE DO, I LET HER DO AS SHE PLEASES *ONLY* WHEN I'M AROUND TO PICK UP AFTER HER.
THOUGH IT'S ALL TO HELP HER GROW, I CAN'T VERY WELL LET HER RUN FREELY WITHOUT MY SUPERVISION.

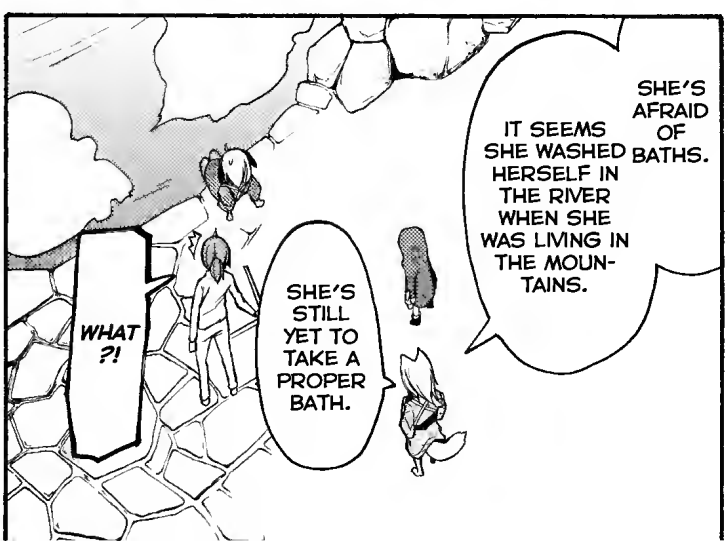
PART OF IT HAS TO DO WITH BEING IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY,
BUT BEFORE THAT, IT'S A MATTER OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS.

I SEE...

HOT WATER ...
WHAT'RE YOU COWER-IN' FOR?


ちょん
DIP

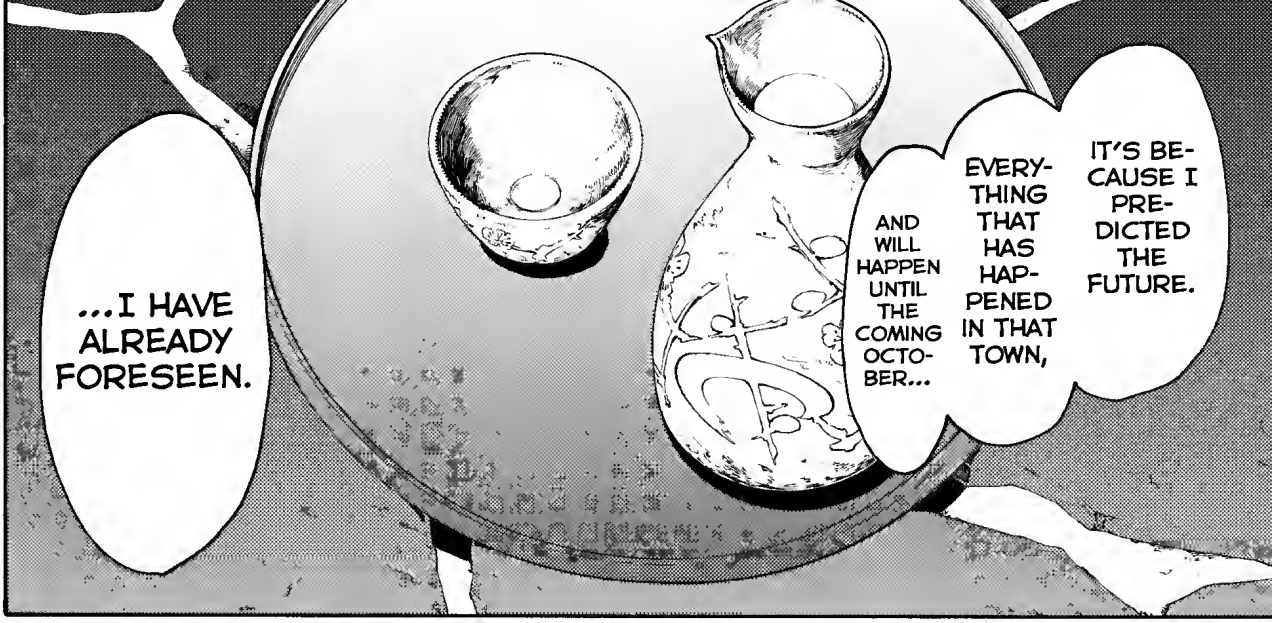
ガラッ
CLACK
THAT'S NO GOOD! IF YOU DON'T BATHE AND STAY HYGIENIC ...

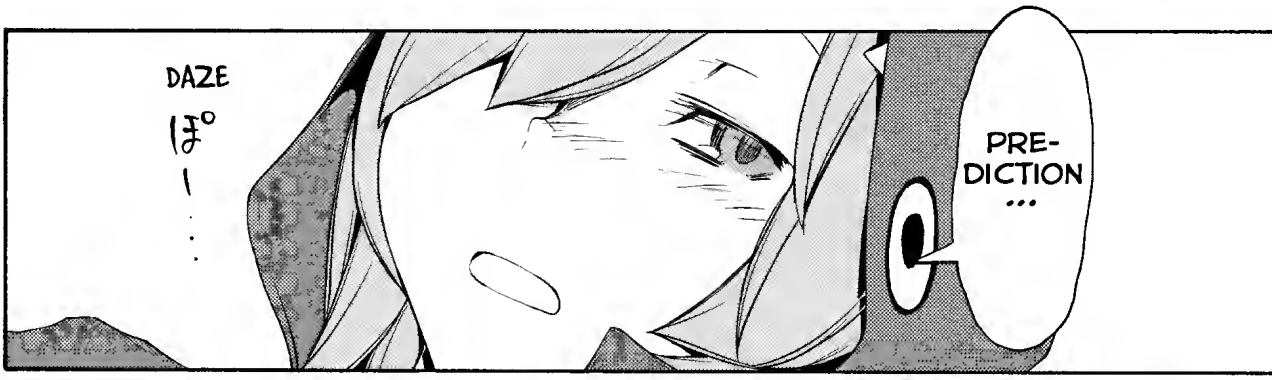

SHE'S AFRAID OF BATHS.
IT SEEMS SHE WASHED HERSELF IN THE RIVER WHEN SHE WAS LIVING IN THE MOUN-TAINS.
SHE'S STILL YET TO TAKE A PROPER BATH.
WHAT ?!

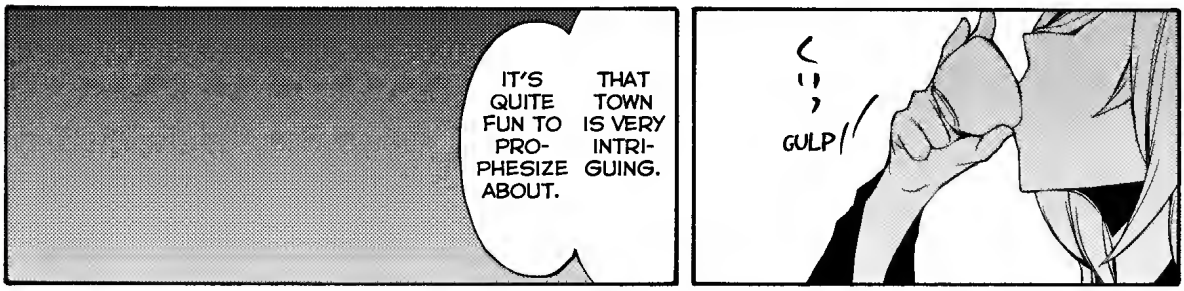
...YOU CAN'T WELCOME GUESTS, CAN YA?!
ORYAAAH
おりゃーっ
MYAAAH
ヤバ!
ばっしゃーん…
SPLOOSH
はぁ～
AAH
SOAK
ぬくぬく
SOAK
ぬくぬく

Y'SEE? FEELS NICE, HUH?
AAAAH...
GULP
SURE IS NICE SOAKIN' IN A HUGE BATH, HUH, KANA?
MINA
カポーン
KA-PLUNK
KANA...?
WHOA! WHAT HAP-PENED TO YOU?!
GEH HEH HEH
KANA
CREEP
WHO LET THE EGGS SPOOOIL?

FWIF
FWIF...
I'M SOR-RY...
IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT.
THE SULFUR IN THE WATER GOT TO YOU, DID IT?
I SEE YOU STILL HAVE THAT BRUISE...
...FROM WHEN ENJIN KID-NAPPED YOU.
IT SHOWS UP WHEN-EVER MY BODY GETS WARM.
IT'S FADING LITTLE BY LITTLE, BUT...
GIVE IT TIME.
I'M SUR-PRISED YOU KNOW ABOUT ENJIN-CHAN...
FU, FU.

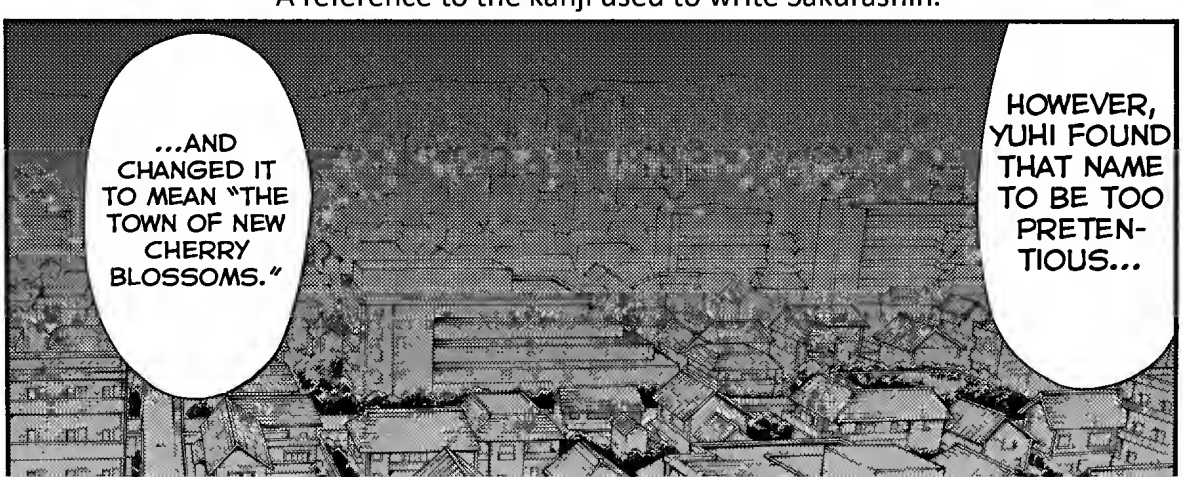

IT'S BECAUSE I PREDICTED THE FUTURE.
EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED IN THAT TOWN,
AND WILL HAPPEN UNTIL THE COMING OCTOBER...
...I HAVE ALREADY FORESEEN.

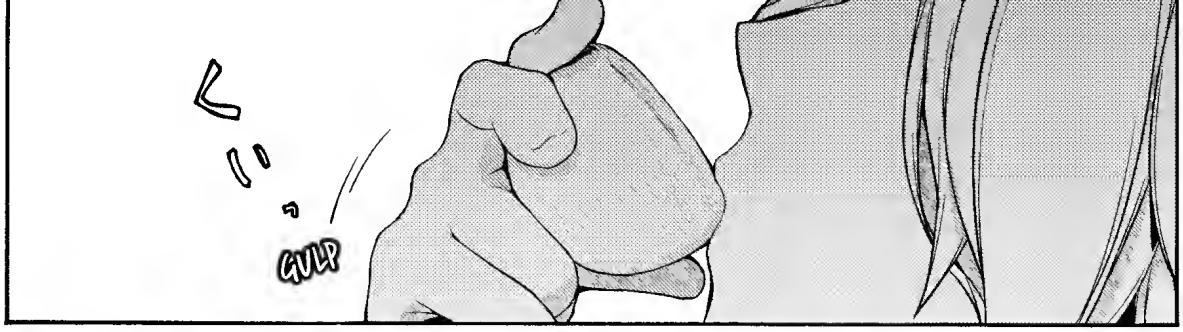

PREDICTION...
DAZE
ぼー...


GULP!
THAT TOWN IS VERY INTRIGUING.
IT'S QUITE FUN TO PROPHESIZE ABOUT.

BOTH YUHI... AND YAE...
...HAVE ALSO MADE THEIR PREDICTIONS, THOUGH I DOUBT THEY'VE MENTIONED IT.
AND THEY'RE GUIDING EVERYTHING IN THAT TOWN TOWARDS OCTOBER IN A MEANINGFUL WAY.

*A reference to the kanji used to write Sakurashin.




GULP

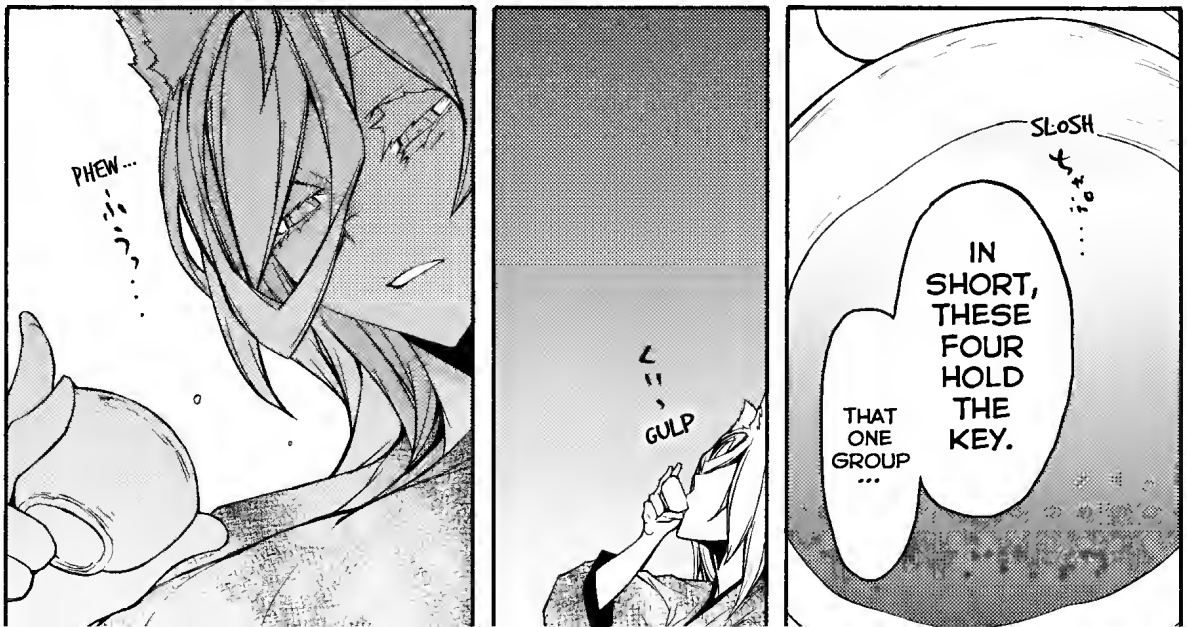
I SEE...
IT MUST BE HARD HAVING TO THINK OF SO MUCH...
IN-DEED.
THOUGH THERE ARE SIMPLER WAYS TO THINK ABOUT IT.

THE HIIZUMI FAMILY HEAD, *AKINA HIIZUMI.*

THE AVATAR OF DRAGONS AND ACTING MAYOR, *HIME YARIZAKURA.*

A HALF-DEMON NEITHER HUMAN NOR MONSTER, *KOTOHA ISONE.*

AND THE ONLY RELATIVE OF ENJIN'S HOST BODY, GIN, *AO NANAMI.*

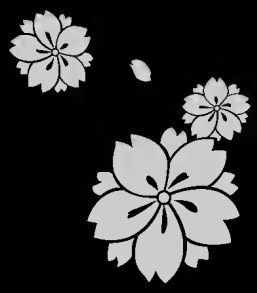

PHEW...
GULP
SLOSH
IN SHORT, THESE FOUR HOLD THE KEY.
THAT ONE GROUP...

WHOOSH
YOUNG LADY,
ARE YOU ABLE...
...TO KEEP WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU A SECRET?
SWIF
CAN YOU HOLD IT SAFELY IN YOUR BREAST...
...WITHOUT IT BREAKING YOUR HEART IN TWO?
fWOO
SNORE

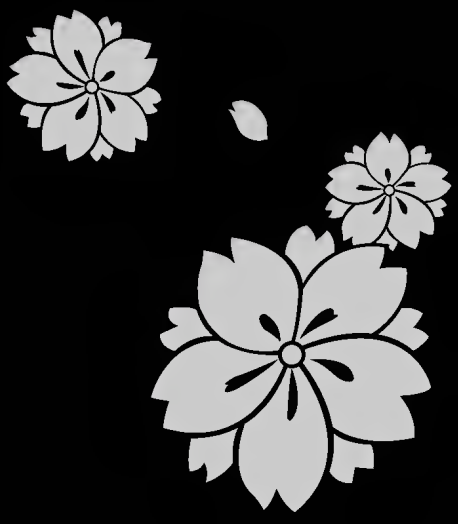
CLENCH
THE BURDEN OF THE TRUTH IS TOO MUCH FOR ME TO BEAR ALONE.
I'M THE ONE WHO CAN'T SEEM TO KEEP IT A SECRET.
I'VE SAID TOO MUCH. WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO ME?
I MUST HAVE DRUNK TOO MUCH.
KOTOHA ISONE.
AO NANAMI.
AKINA HIIZUMI.
HIME YARI-ZAKURA.
FWOOO
TO THINK THAT COME THE MONTH OF GODS...

...THAT QUARTET...

...WOULD BE DOWN A MEMBER...



To be Continued .....

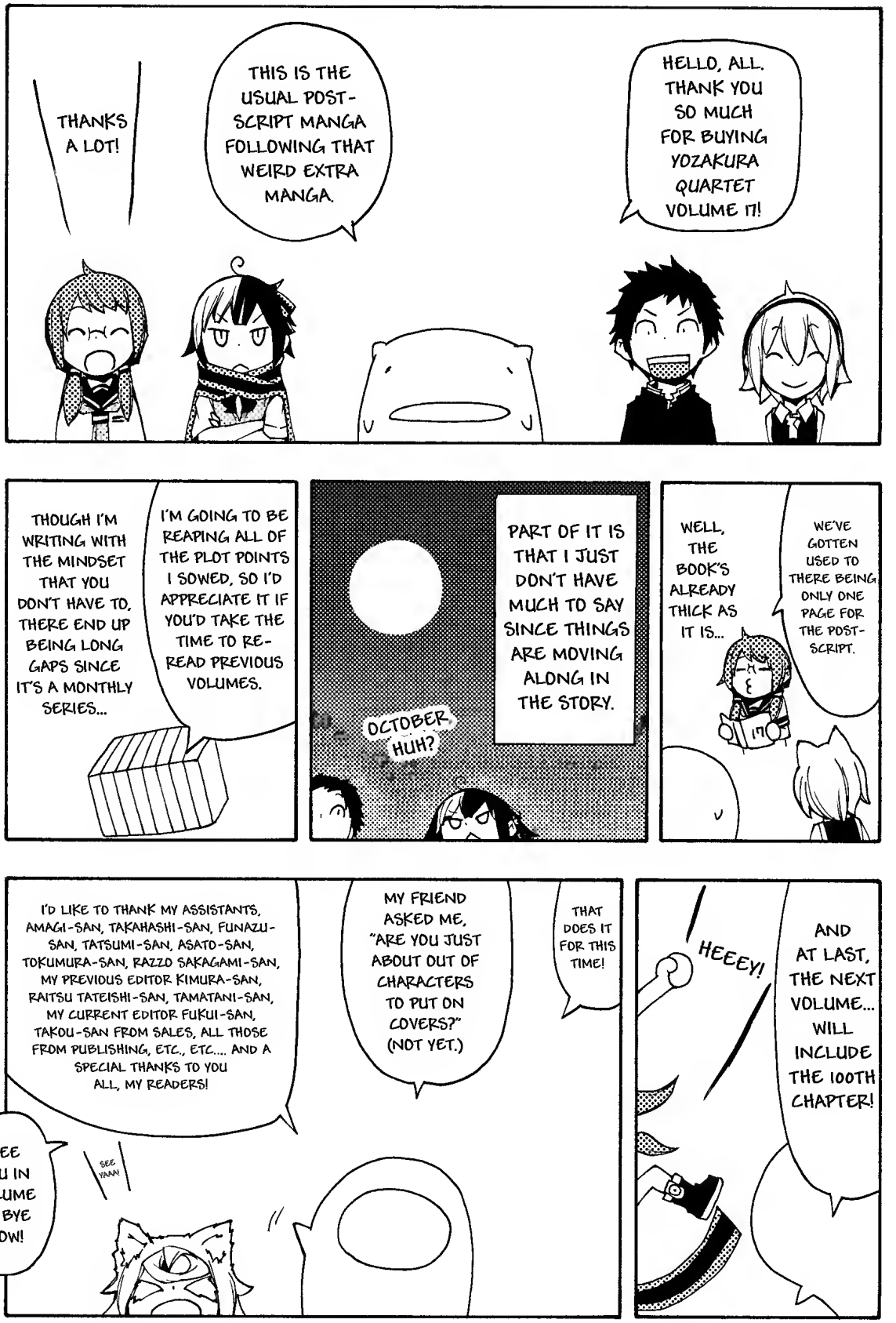


MONTHLY SHONEN SIRIUS JANUARY 2015 ISSUE COVER

Sign: YozaQuart Manor

I WOULDN'T MIND... LIVING WITH THE LANDLADY ...
OH, THAT'S HOW YOU ROLL.
WHY DON'T YOU TWO ROOM TO-GETH-ER?
UMM ...
OUT OF THE QUES-TION...
NO, I'M NOT INTO GIRLS AT ALL ...
THAT'S JUST KIN-DA...
CREEPY...
OH, RIGHT! I FORGOT YOUR PER-SONALITY'S NOTHING LIKE THE MAIN STORY!
HUH ...?
I MEAN, YOU LIKE GIRLS ...
THAT WORKS OUT PER-FECTLY FOR YOU, RIGHT?
I COMPLETELY FORGOT THE PLAN WAS TO GIVE EVERYONE THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE PER-SONALITY...
I WAS EXACT-LY THE SAME.
ME, TOO.

POSTSCRIPT MANGA



Yozakura Quartet 17

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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